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T H E

Invifible Spy.

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E X P L O R A L I B U S.

In FOUR VOLUMES.

V O L . I.



L O N D O N:

Printed for T. GARDNER, at Cowley's Head,
near St. Clement's Church in the Strand.

M,D,CC,LV.

СИТ

Любовь
Константина
Смирнова

УДАЧА

СВЯТОЙ ВЛАДИМИР

СЕВЕРОВОСТОЧНАЯ КОМПАНИЯ

ЛЮБОВЬ



ХОДОДА

СЕВЕРОВОСТОЧНАЯ КОМПАНИЯ
САНКТ-ПЕТЕРБУРГСКАЯ ПОДЛЕСКОВАЯ

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THE
Invisible Spy.

BOOK I.

CHAP. I.
INTRODUCTION.

To the PUBLIC.



Have observed that when a new book begins to make any noise in the world, as I am pretty certain this will do, every one is desirous of becoming acquainted with the author; and this impatience increases the more, the more he

endeavours to conceal himself.—I expect to hear an hundred different names inscribed to the Invisible,—some of which I should, perhaps, be proud of, others as much ashamed to own.—Some will doubtless take me for a philosopher,—others for a fool;—with some I shall pass for a man of pleasure,—with others for a stoic;—some will look upon me as a courtier,—others as a patriot;—but whether I am any one of these, or whether I am even a man or a woman, they will find it, after all their conjectures, as difficult to discover as the longitude.

I think it therefore a duty incumbent on my good-nature to put an early stop to such fruitless inquisitions, and also at the same time to satisfy, in some measure, the curiosity of the public, by giving an account of the means by which I attained the Gift of Invisibility I possess.

Know then, gentle reader, that in the former part of my life it was my good fortune to do a signal service to a certain venerable person since dead:—he was descended from the ancient Magi of the Chaldeans, inherited their wisdom, and was well versed in all the mystic secrets of their art:—besides his gratitude for the good office I had done him, he seem'd to

to have found something in my humour and manner of behaviour that extremely pleased him ; — he would often have me with him, and entertain'd me with discourses on things which otherwise I should not have had the least idea of.

But it was not long that I enjoy'd this benefit ; — he sent for me one day to let me know he was much indisposed, and desired I would come immediately to him : — I went, and found him not as I expected, in bed, but sitting in an easy chair ; — after the first salutations were over, and I had placed myself pretty near him ; — ‘ My good friend,’ said he, ‘ taking hold of my hand, I feel that I must shortly quit this busy world ; — ‘ the silver cord is loosen'd,—the golden bowl is broken, — every thing within ‘ me hastens to a speedy dissolution ; and ‘ I was willing to see you once more be- ‘ fore I set out on my journey to that ‘ land of shades,—as Hamlet truly says,

That undiscover'd country, from whose
bourn No traveller returns.

‘ As the remembrance of you, con-
tinued he, will certainly accompany me
beyond the grave, I would wish, me-

• thinks, to hold some place in yours
• while you remain on earth, to the end
• that I may not be quite a stranger to
• you when we meet in eternity.—I have
• no land, — nor tenements, — nor gold
• nor silver to bequeath, yet am not desti-
• tute of something which may be equal-
• ly worthy your acceptance.'

Then, after a little pause, — ‘ Take
this,’ added he, giving me a key, ‘ it
will admit you into a closet which no
one but myself has ever enter’d ; — I
call it my Cabinet of Curiosities, and I
believe you will find such things there
as will deserve that name ; — chuse from
among them any one that most suits
your fancy, and accept it as a token of
my love.

He said no more, but rung his bell
for a servant, who, by his orders, con-
ducted me by a narrow winding stair-
case to the top of the house, and left me
at a little door, which I open’d with the
key that had been given me, and found
myself in a small square room, built after
the manner of a turret : — all the furni-
ture was an old wicker chair, with a
piece of blanket thrown carelessly over it,
I suppose to defend the Sage from the air
when he sat there to study ; — near it was
placed

placed a table, not less antiquated, with two globes ; — a standish with some paper, and several books in manuscript ; but wrote in characters too unintelligible for me to comprehend any part of what they contain'd : — just in the middle of the ceiling hung a pretty large chrystral ball, filled with a shining yellowish powder, and this inscription pasted on it :

The ILLUSIVE POWDER.

“ A Small quantity of this powder,
“ blown thro' the quill of a por-
“ cupine when the Moon is in Aries,
“ raises splendid visions in the people's
“ eyes ; and, if apply'd when the same
“ planet is in Cancer, spreads universal
“ terror and dismay.”

I easily perceived that this was one of the curiosities my friend had mentioned, and a great one indeed it was ; but as I had neither interest nor inclinaiton to impose upon my fellow creatures, I judged it fitter for the possession of some one or other of the mighty rulers of the earth.

I then turn'd towards the walls, which were all hung round with tellescopes, — horoscopes, — microscopes, — talismans, — multipliers, — magnifiers of all degrees.

and sizes, — loadstones cut in various forms, and great numbers of mathematical instruments ; — but these, as I was altogether ignorant of their uses, I pass'd slightly over, 'till I came to a hand-bell, which having the appearance of no other than such as I had ordinarily seen at a lady's tea-table, I should have taken no notice of, but for a label pre-fixed to it, on which I found these words :

The SIMPATHETIC BELL.

“ **T**HE least tinkle of which not only
“ sets all the bells of the whole
“ country, be it of ever so large extent,
“ in motion, without the help of men to
“ pluck the ropes, but also makes them
“ play whatever changes the party is
“ pleased to nominate.”

Tho' I thought art could produce no greater wonder than this bell, yet I felt no strong desire of becoming the master of it; but proceeded to examine what farther rarities this extraordinary cabinet would present. — The next I took notice of was a phial, not much unlike those which are commonly sold in the shops with French hungary-water;—it had this inscription :

SALTS OF MEDITATION,

" WHICH held close to the nostrils,
" for the space of three seconds
" and a half, corrects all vague and wan-
" dering thoughts,—fixes the mind, and
" enables it to ponder justly on any sub-
" ject that requires deliberation."

This beneficial secret I also rejected, through a mere point of conscience, as thinking it would be a much better service to mankind if in the possession of the divines,—lawyers,—politicians, or physicians, especially the two last mentioned, as it might prevent the one from engaging in any enterprize they have not abilities or courage to go through with, and the other from falling into those gross mistakes they are frequently guilty of in relation to the case of the diseased.

I should have ruminated much longer than I did on the excellence of these wonderful salts, if another object had not suddenly catched my sight;—it had the form of a skull-cap, or such a coif as serjeants at law wear when a new one is called up:—what it was made out of I know not, for I am certain it was neither of the silk, woollen, or linnen manufactory; — it

was, however, of so light and thin a texture, that as it hung at some distance from the wall the least breath of air gave it motion,— it was fasten'd by a single thread to the ceiling, to which also was fixed a slip of paper, which contain'd these words:

The SHRINKING CAP,

“ WHICH put upon the head immediately contracts all the muscles and sinews of the whole body, so as to render the person who wears it small enough to enter into the mouth of a lady’s tea-pot, or a quart bottle; but great care must be taken no accident happens to the vehicle while he is in it; for if it breaks during that time, the man will never more recover his former dimensions.”

I hesitated not a moment to reject this, as it seemed calculated for no other purpose than merely to amuse and astonish, and could be of no real service, either to myself or any body else:—I should, perhaps, not even have thought of it more, if an accident had not brought it fresh into my head: — my readers can scarce have forgot, that about some four or five years ago the town was invited, in a very pompous

pous manner, to see a man jump into a quart bottle on the stage of the little theatre in the Hay-market;—on the sight of the bills I presently concluded that the person who was to exhibit this wonderful performance must certainly be in possession of my friend's shrinking cap; nor was at a loss afterwards to guess, why so illustrious and numerous an assembly, as came to be spectators, were disappointed in their expectations: — I doubted not, but second thoughts had reminded the man of the danger his bottle would be in from the waggish humour of some among the audience, and that an apple, or orange, or even a hazle-nut, darted from a judicious hand, might give a sudden crack to the brittle vessel, and so he would be compelled to continue a lilliputian for his whole life.

The next, and indeed the first thing that raised in me any covetous emotions, was the apparatus of a belt, but seemed no more than a collection of attoms gathered together in that form and playing in the sun-beams. — I could not persuade myself it was a real substance, till I took it down, and then found it so light, that if I shut my eyes I knew not that I had any thing in my hand.—The label annexed to it had these words:

The BELT of INVISIBILITY,

“ WHICH, fasten’d round the body,
“ next the skin, no sooner becomes
“ warm than it renders the party invi-
“ sible to all human eyes.”

A little farther, on the same side of the wall, was placed a Tablet, or Pocket book; which, on examining, I found was composed of a clear glassy substance, firm, yet thin as the bubbles which we sometimes see rise on the surface of the waters; — it was malleable, and doubled in many foldings, so that, when shut, it seemed very small; but when extended was more long and broad than any sheet I ever saw of imperial paper; — its uses were decipher’d in the following inscription:

The WONDERFUL TABLET,

“ WHICH, in whatever place it is
“ spread open, receives the impres-
“ sion of every word that is spoken, in as
“ distinct a manner as if engrav’d; and
“ can no way be expunged, but by the
“ breath of a virgin, of so pure an inno-
“ cence as not to have even thought on the
“ difference of sexes; — after such a one,
“ if such a one is to be found, has blown
“ pretty

" pretty hard upon it for the space of
" seven seconds and three quarters, she
" must wipe it gently with the first
" down under the left wing of an un-
" fledg'd swan, pluck'd when the moon
" is in three degrees of Virgo; — this
" done, the Tablet will be entirely free
" from all former memorandums, and
" fit to take a new impression.

" Note, That the virgin must exceed
" twelve years of age."

I was very much divided between these two; — the Belt of Invisibility put a thousand rambles into my head, which promised discoveries highly flattering to the inquisitiveness of my humour; but then the Tablet, recording every thing I should hear spoken, which I confess my memory is too defective to retain, fill'd me with the most ardent desire of becoming master of so inestimable a treasure: — in fine, — I wanted both; — so encroaching is the temper of mankind, that the grant of one favour generally paves the way for soliciting a second.

While I was in this dilemma a stratagem occur'd, which I hesitated not to put in practice, and found it answer to my wishes; — I took both the Belt and

Tablet in my hand ; and, having carefully lock'd the door of the cabinet, returned to the Adept ; — he saw the Belt, which being long, hung over my wrist, but not perceiving I had the Tablet, — ‘ The choice you have made, said he with a smile, confirms the truth of what I always believed, that curiosity is the most prevailing passion of the human mind.’

‘ However just that position may be,’ reply’d I, ‘ that propensity is not strong enough in me, to make me able to decide between the wonderful Tablet, and the no less wonderful Belt ; — they appear to me of such equal estimation, that whenever I would fix on the one, the benefits of the other rise up in opposition to my choice ; and I know not which of the two I should receive with most pleasure, or leave with the least regret ; — I have therefore brought both down to you, and intreat you will determine for me.’

I soon perceived he understood my meaning perfectly well ; for, after a little pause, — ‘ When I made you the offer,’ said he, ‘ of whatever you liked best among my collection of curiosities, I intended not that your acceptance of one thing should render you unhappy through

• through the want of another ; — take
• then, I beseech you, both the Belt and
• the Tablet, — you shall leave neither
• of them behind you ; — nor do I won-
• der you should desire to unite them ; —
• they are, in a manner, concomitant ;
• and the satisfaction that either of them
• would be able to procure, would be in-
• compleat without the assistance of the
• other.'

Thus was I put in possession of a treasure, which I thought the more valuable, as I was pretty certain no other person, in this kingdom at least, enjoy'd the like ; — after making proper acknowledgments to the obliging donor, I took my leave and returned home with a heart overflowing with delight.

I was not long before I made trial of my Belt, and found the effects as the label had described ; I also open'd my Tablet, — spoke, and saw my words im- mediately imprinted on it ; — I then pro- cured some Swans-down, according to direc^tion, and intreated several young ladies to breathe upon it one after another ; but tho' I dare answer for their virtue, the favour they did me was in vain, — the impression remain'd still indelible.

Indeed, when I began to consider maturely on the conditions prescrib'd in the label of the Tablet, I was sensible that it was not enough for a virgin to be perfectly innocent, she must also be equally ignorant, to be qualified for the performance of the task requir'd; and not to have once thought on the difference of sexes, seem'd a thing scarce possible after six or seven years of age at most, and would have been as great a prodigy as either of those had been bestow'd upon me by the Adept.

What would I not have given for such a one as Dorinda in Shakespear's Inchant-ed Island; but such a hope being vain I was extremely puzzled, and knew not what to do; — at last, however, a lucky thought got me over the difficulty; — it was this: — I prevail'd, for a small sum of money, with a very poor widow, who had several children, to let me have a girl, of about three years old, to bring up and educate as I judged proper; — I then committed my little purchase to the care of an elderly woman, whose discre-tion I had experienced; — I communica-ted to her the whole of my design, and instructed her how to proceed in order to render it effectual.

The

The little creature was kept in an upper room, which had no window in it but a sky-light in the roof of the house, so could be witness of nothing that pass'd below ; — her diet was thin and very sparing ; — she was not permitted to sleep above half the time generally allow'd for repose, and saw no living thing but the old woman who lay with her, gave her food, and did all that was necessary about her.

I frequently visited them in my Invisibility, and was highly pleased and diverted with the diligence of my good old woman ; — she not only obey'd my orders with the utmost punctuality, but did many things of her own accord, which, though very requisite, I had not thought of. — To prevent her young charge from falling into any of those distempers which the want of exercise sometimes occasions, she contrived to make a swing for her across the room, taught her to play at batteldor and shuttlecock, — to toss the ball and catch it at the rebound, and such like childish gambols, which both delighted her mind and kept her limbs in a continual motion.

This conduct, and this regimen constantly observed, maintain'd my virgin's purity inviolate, as I did not fail to make an essay in a few days after she enter'd into her thirteenth year, and the success of my endeavours made me not regret the pains I had been at for such a length of time.

Now it runs in my head that some people will not give credit to one word of all this ; for as there are many who believe too much, there are yet many more who will believe nothing at all but what their own shallow reason enables them to comprehend : — well then, — let them judge as they think fit, — let them puzzle their wifey noddles 'till they ake, — I shall sit snug in my Invisibility while they lose half the pleasure ; and, it may be, all the improvement of my lucubrations.

But those who resolve to pursue me through the following pages, with an ingenuous candour, I flatter myself will lose nothing by the chace ; — they will find me in various places, though not in so many as perhaps they may expect ; — they would in vain seek me at court-balls, — city-feasts, — the halls of justice, or meetings for elections ; — nor do I much haunt

haunt the opera or play-houses :—in fine, — I avoid all crouds, — all mix'd assemblies, except the masquerade and Venetian balls.—I am a member of the establish'd church ; but as I am not ashame'd of appearing at divine worship, never put on my Invisible Belt when I go there. — I revere regal authority, but seldom visit the cabinet of princes ; because they are generally so filled with a thick fog, that the christaline texture of my Tablets could not receive what was said there, so as to be read distinctly ; — nor do I much care to venture myself among their ministers of state, or any of their under-working tools ; the floors of their rooms, in which their cabals are held, are composed of such slippery materials that the least *faux pas* might endanger my Invisibility, if not my neck. — I should be more frequently with the military gentlemen, but that they are so apt to draw their swords without occasion, that while they think they are fencing in the air they might chance to cut my Belt in funder ; — and what a figure I should make, when one half of me was discover'd and the other was concealed. — I will not mention the consequences such a fight might produce in some of them.

But it would be of little importance to the public to be told where I am not, unless they also know where I am : — have patience then, good people, and you shall be satisfied.

Sometimes I step in at one or other of those gaming-houses, which are above law, by being under the protection of the great ; but I seldom stay long in any of them, as I can see nothing there but what I have seen an hundred times before in those lesser assemblies of the same kind, that have been so justly put down by authority.

Sometimes I peep into the closet of an antiquarian, where I find matter enough to excite both my pity and contempt.— What greater instance can we have of the depravity of human nature than in a rich curmudgeon, who, while he grumbles to allow his family necessary food, chearfully unties his bags and pours out fifty, or it may be an hundred guineas, for the purchase of a bit of old copper, — only because a fellow of more wit than honesty tells him it was found under the ruins of an ancient wall, where it had been buried ever since the time of Julius Cæsar or Severus?

Some-

Sometimes too I amuse myself with turning over the collection of a virtuoso, where I am always filled with the utmost astonishment, at finding sums sufficient to endow an hospital lavish'd in the purchase of wings of butterflies,—the shells of fishes,—dried reptiles,—the paw of some exotic animal, and such like baubles, neither pleasing in their prospect, nor useful in their natures.

Sometimes I make one at the levee of a rich heir, just arrived from his travels to the possession of an overgrown estate; where I cannot help trembling for the future fate of the poor youth, on seeing him besieged with a crowd of marriage-brokers,—pleasure-brokers,—exchange-brokers,—lawyers,—gamesters,—French taylors,—Dresden-milliners,—petitioning harlots,—congratulating poets; —in fine, with sharpers, flatterers and sycophants of every kind.

Sometimes I mingle in the route of a woman of quality,—see who wins,—who loses at play, and in what manner ladies are frequently obliged to pay their debts of honour.

When I have nothing better to employ my time, I loyter away some hours in St. James's-park, Kensington-gardens, or at Vaux-hall, Ranelagh, and Mary-le-bon, and am often witness of some scenes exciting present mirth and future reflection.

But my chief delight is in the drawing-room of some celebrated toasts, whence I often steal into their bed-chambers ; — but don't be frightened, ladies, — I never carry my inspections farther than the ruelle.

These are some few particulars of the tour I have made ; — to give the whole detail would be too tedious, — I shall therefore only say, that wherever I am found, I shall always be found a lover of morality, and no enemy to religion, or any of its worthy professors, of what sect or denomination soever.

And now, reader, having let thee into the secret of my history, as far as it is convenient for me to reveal, I shall leave thee to enjoy the advantage of those discoveries my Invisibility enabled me to make.

C H A P. II.

Contains some premises very necessary to be observed by every reader; and also an account of the author's first Invisible Visit.

IT was in the beginning of that season of the year which affords most food for an enquiring mind, that I had got all things in order to sally forth on my Invisible Progressions; — the king was lately return'd from visiting his German dominions; — the august representatives of the whole body of the people were just ready to assemble; — Hanover had given back our statesmen, and Paris our fine gentlemen; — the expounders of the law were hurrying to Westminster-hall, and those of the gospel to pay their compliments at St. James's; — the ships of war were mostly moor'd, and their gallant commanders had quitted the rough athletic toil for the soft charms of ease and luxury; — the land heroes, who having no employment for their swords had pass'd their days in rural sports, now hunted after a different sort of game at the theatres and masquerades; — frequent consul-

consultations were held at the toylets of the ladies, on ways and means to out-shine each other in the circle ; — former amours were now revived, and new ones every day commenced ; — madam Intelligence, with her thousand and ten thousand emissaries, all loaded with reports, some true, some false, flew swiftly thro' each quarter of this great metropolis ; and had every pore of every human body been an ear, they all might have been fully gratified.

But tho' I confess myself to have been born with the most insatiable curiosity of knowing all that can be known, yet I could never depend upon the credit of common fame for the truth of any thing I heard ; — always remembering mr. Dryden's words :

- ‘ With wondrous art things done she
‘ magnifies,
- ‘ Feigns things not done, and mingles
‘ truth with lies.

How pleasing therefore must this Gift of Invisibility be to a person of my inquisitive, and at the same time incredulous disposition ; — a gift which enabled me to penetrate into the most hidden secrets, and

and be convinced of their veracity by the testimony of my own eyes and ears.

But besides the gratification of a darling passion, I had another, and much more justifiable reason for the value I set upon the legacy of my departed friend ; which is this, — I have it in my power to pluck off the mask of hypocrisy from the seeming saint ; — to expose vice and folly in all their various modes and attitudes ; to strip a bad action of all the specious pretences made to conceal or palliate it, and shew it in its native ugliness. — At the same time, I have also the means to rescue injur'd innocence from the cruel attacks begun by envy and scandal, and propagated by prejudice and ill-nature. — In fine, I am enabled, by this precious gift, to set both things and persons in their proper colours ; and not in such as either, thro' malice, or partial favour, they are frequently made to appear.

I should be sorry, however, if any thing I have said should give the reader occasion to imagine I am going to present him with a book of scandal ; — no, — the secrets of families, and characters of persons, shall be always sacred with me ; — I shall give no man the opportunity of indulging a malicious pleasure of laughing

ing

ing at his neighbour's faults ; — my aim in this work is not to ridicule, but reform. — I would touch the hearts, not call a blush upon the face ;—and as few people have errors so peculiar to themselves as there are not many guilty of the like, if the offender keeps his own council, he may very well pass undistinguish'd among the crowd of others equally culpable.

Let no one therefore pretend to point at his companion, and cry out, ‘ This is the man,’—on pain of provoking my Invisibleship to declare his own faults ; but let every one who finds a disagreeable likeness of himself in any of the characters I shall draw, set immediately about rectifying the blemishes which give that resemblance ; and, as I inscribe no real name to the picture, he may safely defy the tongue of censure.

Verramond is justly accounted one of the most accomplish'd gentlemen of the present age, — the gracefulness of his person,—the engaging manner of his conversation, — his fine address and uncommon capacity, make his company desir'd by all the young and gay part of the world, as his great learning and perfect knowledge of men and things render him the oracle of the more grave and serious ; — I had fre-

frequently the honour of meeting him at several places where I visited, and found nothing in him which could in the least contradict those high ideas fame had given me of him.

It was therefore natural for me to take the advantage of my Gift of Invisibility, in order to view this great person in his most retired moments; — I mean, when he was alone, and divested of all those modes and ceremonies, which often disguise the real man, and shew him to the public far different from what he is.

Accordingly, the first visit I made in my Belt was to his house; — I slipt in as soon as I saw the door open'd, — went up stairs, and pass'd thro' several rooms till I came to that where he was sitting; — I found him with a book in his hand, on which he seem'd very intent; — I doubted not but it was a treatise of philosophy, or some other piece of learning or wit, suitable to the capacity of so great a genius; but how much was I surprised, when, looking over his shoulder, I perceived it was Hoyle's method of playing the Game of Whist! — He appeared more than ordinarily taken up with one page, for he read it over three or four times, then started up from his chair, and throwing the book

from him in a rage, — ‘ Curse on this stuff,’ cry’d he, it is good for nothing but to teach a man how to undo himself with more art.’—After walking for some minutes backwards and forwards in the room, with a disorder’d motion, he flung himself into his chair, and fell into a profound resvery, in which I knew not how long he might have continued, if he had not been rous’d from it by the approach of a person, who I presently found was his steward.

The business on which this man came into the room was no way pleasing to Verramond; but because I would avoid the troublesome repetitions of, — said he, — and reply’d he, — and resum’d the other, and such like introductions to every speech, I shall present all those dialogues, which are proper to be communicated to the public, in the same manner as in the printed copies of theatrical performances.

Steward. ‘ My lord, the several tradesmen, whom your lordship order’d to come this morning, are below and wait your Lordship’s commands.

Verramond. ‘ I have no commands for them at present, so send them away.

Steward.

Steward. ‘ Shall I bid them attend
‘ your lordship to-morrow ?

Verramond. ‘ Aye, — to-morrow six
‘ months if you will ; for I shall scarce
‘ have any businesf with them before.

Steward. ‘ My lord, I told them they
‘ should all be paid off this morning, —
‘ What excuse can I make to them for
‘ such a disappointment ?

Verramond. ‘ E'en what you will ; —
‘ if you can invent nothing better, you
‘ may tell them that you ly'd when you
‘ made them that promise in my name.

Steward. ‘ Your lordship knows it was
‘ by your own order I made them that
‘ promise ; and that you sent me into the
‘ city yesterday for money, which I doubt-
‘ ed not but was to make good what I
‘ had told them : — if your lordship
‘ please to consider it is now a long
‘ time since they brought in their bills,
‘ and they have had a great deal of pa-
‘ tience.

Verramond. ‘ Rot their patience. — Do
‘ you think to make a merit to me of
‘ their patience ? — Go, I say, send

‘ them away, and let me hear no more
of them.’

The tone in which Verramond utter'd these words was so austere that the honest domestic had not courage to reply, but left the room immediately, probably to receive no softer treatment below from those he was compell'd to disappoint, than he had just met with above for attempting to intercede in their behalf.

Lord Macro was presently after introduced ;—the late sullenness of Verramond seem'd now entirely dissipated ; — whatever was in his heart his countenance were only smiles, and he ran to receive him with open arms and all the testimonies of the most perfect satisfaction ; — and yet, as I soon found by the discourse they had together, this very Macro, the night before, had won of him at play fifteen hundred pounds, which was the sum he had set apart for the payment of his creditors. — Their conversation turning wholly upon gaming, a subject neither entertaining nor improving, I shall give my readers no more than a bare specimen of it.

Lord Macro. ‘ My dear Verramond, I
could not be easy 'till I saw you this
morn-

morning.—I thought you left the company somewhat abruptly last night, and was afraid your ill luck had given you some chagrin.

Verramond. ‘ Not in the least, my dear Macro, — I never think any thing lost that a friend gains ; but I remember’d that I had some letters to write, otherwise should have staid and trusted for tune with a brace or two of hundreds farther.

Lord Macro. ‘ As it is an honour to get the better of your lordship in any thing, so it will be no disgrace to be overcome by a person of such superior abilities ; therefore I am ready to give you your revenge when you think fit.

Verramond. ‘ Nay, — as for that, Macro, it must be confess’d you know the game better than I.’

Here follow’d a long succession of mutual compliments on each other’s skill in play, of which growing heartily tired, I was beginning to think of leaving the place, and should have done so, if the appearance of the steward a second time had not made me expect some change in the scene ; — his errand, and the success

it met with, will not perhaps appear so extraordinary to those acquainted with the modish way of thinking as it then did to me.

Steward. ‘ Farmer Hobson is below, my lord; — the poor man has rode hard all night, on purpose to reach town this morning and lay his miserable condition before your lordship.

Verramond. ‘ Pish, what have I to do with his condition?

Steward. ‘ He says, my lord, that his crop prov’d so bad last year that he had scarce wherewith to stock the ground; — that mr. Hardmeat, your lordship’s steward in the country, is very sensible of his misfortunes, yet, though there are but five quarters due, threatens to turn him out of the farm next week; — he therefore humbly hopes your lordship will take compassion on him, as he has six small children, and his wife now lying-in of the seventh.

Verramond. ‘ What business have such fellows to get children? — Does he expect my rent shall go for the maintenance of his brats..

Steward..

Steward. ‘ He begs your lordship to consider, that for these eleven years he has rented the farm he has always paid your lordship honestly, and does not doubt, through providence, but to do so still, if your lordship is pleased to have patience till next harvest is over, and not ruin him at once.

Verramond. ‘ Let me hear no more of this stuff,—I leave all to mr. Hardmeat, he knows what he has to do, and I shall give myself no trouble about it.’

The steward, with whose good-nature I was infinitely charm'd, had his mouth open to urge something farther in behalf of the distress'd farmer, but was prevented by a servant that instant coming in and presenting a letter to Verramond, who then bid him go down and tell the unhappy suppliant he might return home, for there was no answer to be given to his complaint.

Verramond would not open the letter he had just receiv'd 'till he knew who sent it; but on his footman's informing him it came from mr. Gamble, he hastily broke the seal and found the contents as follows :

“ May it please your lordship,

“ My ever honour’d lord,

Bridewell.

“ I Happen’d to be engag’d last night
“ at a house where the constable with
“ his possee made a forcible entrance,
“ demolish’d our tables, put most of
“ the company to flight, and seiz’d the
“ rest; I was unluckily one of this last
“ clas, and committed to durance vile,
“ as Hudibras says, and your lordship
“ will perceive by the date hereof.

“ A person here has undertaken, for
“ a fee of five guineas, to procure my
“ immediate discharge, and I do not
“ doubt, by the method he proposes, but
“ that he is able to do it. — I am not,
“ however, at present, master of as many
“ shillings, nor can any way raise the
“ money he demands, having been
“ obliged, the day before this accident
“ besel me, to leave my watch, linnen,
“ and best apparel at mr. Grub’s, in trust
“ for a small sum requir’d of me by the
“ parish officers, on account of a bastard
“ child, which a wench of the town has
“ done me the honour to swear I am the
“ father of.

“ All

“ All my hopes, therefore, of getting
“ out of limbo are in your lordship’s
“ generosity, which if you vouchsafe to
“ grant me this one more proof of, I
“ shall, if possible, be more than ever,

“ With the most profound duty,

“ Dear patron,

“ Your devoted vassal,

“ RICHARD GAMBLE.

“ P. S. I had forgot to acquaint your
“ lordship, that I shall have need of
“ more than the above-mentioned sum
“ for discharging the fees of this cursed
“ hole, without the payment of which I
“ cannot be released.”

Verramond hesitated not a moment to comply with this request, nor even whether he should exceed what was desired of him :— he drew out his purse, put ten guineas into the footman’s hands, and order’d him to run directly to Bridewell ; — Carry that money to mr. Gamble, with his compliments, and let him know he should be glad to see him as soon as he had recover’d his liberty.

Who will say now that Verramond is not liberal? — but alas, — How ill placed an act of benevolence was this? — was it not rather caprice than true charity, which induced him to bestow this money to save a common sharper from the punishment he justly merited; yet at the same time refuse to an honest industrious tenant a small respite of payment, tho' to preserve him and his poor family from sure destruction? — but Gamble was a necessary person at a gaming-table, — he was of importance to his pleasure that way, and the farmer, being only regarded for the rent he paid, when deficient in that, must be thrown out like a piece of useless lumber, and his place occupy'd by some one who promised to be of greater utility.

Yet do I not think such a conduct is always to be ascribed to the fault of nature, — Verramond has certainly the seeds of virtue and honour in his soul; but they are suffocated and choaked up by his immoderate love of play; — strange is it, that a man capable of thinking so justly, will not be at the pains of thinking at all, but suffer himself to be sway'd, by a darling propensity, to actions, which if he once reflected upon, he would be so far from:

from perpetrating; that he would despise the very temptation of being guilty of.

I left him and Macro together; but, my Tablets being already full, I can repeat no more of their conversation than what my memory supplies me with, which is only that an agreement was made between them to try their fortune a second time at whist; but whether Verramond either recover'd or added to his loss the night before, I did not give myself the trouble to examine; nor, indeed, thought it worthy of any part of my concern.

C H A P. III.

Presents the reader with some passages which cannot fail of being entertaining to those not interested in them, and may be of service to those who are.

A Mong the numerous troops of British toasts, there are few who shine with more distinguish'd lustre, in all public places, than the beautiful Marcella; besides an exact symmetry of features, a most delicate complexion, and a fine turn'd shape, there is something peculiarly enchanting

chanting in her air and mien ; — I never see her without being reminded of the elegant description Milton gives of Eve in her state of innocence :

‘ Grace was in all her steps, heaven in
‘ her eyes,
‘ In every gesture dignity and love.’

She was married very young to Celdon, and tho' neither of their hearts had been consulted in the match, yet they had the reputation of living well together ; — they behaved to each other with the greatest complaisance in public, and if any cause of discontent ever happen'd between them, both had the discretion to keep it extremely private.

I could not, therefore, expect to make any extraordinary discoveries in this family ; — the door, however, happening to be open one day as I pass'd by, I stepp'd in without any previous design, and now I did so was rather excited by curiosity of seeing some fine pictures, which I had been told were in the house, than of prying into the behaviour of the owners.

But it frequently falls out, that what we least seek we most easily find, and that those things which we imagine farthest from

from us are in effect the nearest ;— in passing through the several rooms in this house I saw Marcella writing in her closet, and never was I so much amazed as now to find so fair a form harbour a mind capable of dictating these lines :

To FILLAMOUR.

“ Dearest of your sex,

“ THANKS to the powers of love
“ and liberty, that hated bar to all
“ the happiness of my life is removed for
“ a short time,—Celadon is gone into
“ the country upon a party of pleasure,
“ and this night is entirely my own ;—
“ if therefore no more agreeable engage-
“ ment detains you, come here between
“ the hours of twelve and one ;—I shall
“ take care to send all the family to bed,
“ except the faithful Rachel, who shall
“ attend to admit you, on your giving a
“ gentle rap against the shutter of the par-
“ lour window next the door ;— let me
“ know by the bearer, whether I may
“ expect you,—though it is a blessing I
“ scarce doubt of, if any of that affection
“ be sincere, as you have often vow'd to

“ The believing,

“ And passionate

“ MARCELLA.

Having

Having sealed this billet, she call'd her chamber-maid, and order'd her to send it, as directed, by a trusty porter; — then threw herself upon a couch, — took the novel of Silvia and Philander, — read a little in it, — sigh'd, and seem'd all dissolv'd in the most tender languishment, when her emissary return'd, and brought this answer to her summons :—

To the charming MARCELLA..

“ Dear angel,

“ I Am at present surrounded with a great deal of company, and have no opportunity to thank as I would the kindness of yours; — I can only say, that nothing shall keep me from flying, with all the wings of love, to my adorable Marcella, at the appointed hour; — till then — adieu; — be assured that I am always,

“ With the utmost ardency,

“ Your devoted Vassal,

“ FILLAMOUR.”

The fair libertine now express'd the highest satisfaction, and immediately fell into discourse with her confidant Rachel, concerning the manner in which this nocturnal guest should be conceal'd, and how neither

neither his entrance nor his exit be discover'd, or even suspected by any of the family..

I had no curiosity to know any thing farther of this affair, so took the first opportunity of leaving the house, extremely troubled in my mind that a woman, whose beauty had so much attracted my respect, should prove herself so unworthy of it by her conduct.

' With what boldness, said I within myself, does the lovely wanton run headlong to her ruin, fearless of guilt, and of the punishment which one time or other must be the unfailing consequence ;'

' As if that faultless form could act no crime,

' But heaven on looking on it must forgive ! '

I went home and got my Tablets clear'd from the impure contents of the above recited epistles ; — I wish'd, indeed, to think no more of this transaction ; and, to second my endeavours that way, towards evening fallied out again equipp'd in my Invisible Belt, like a true knight-

knight-errant, in search of such adventures as chance should present me with.

For the sake of amusement I stepp'd into a certain coffee-house, which I had been told was much frequented by the lower class of politicians ; but either I was mis-inform'd, or none of those gentlemen happen'd to be there at the time I was ; I found only a good number of jolly tradesmen, — honest, well-condition'd creatures, who see no farther than their noses, — take every thing for gospel that they find in the Gazette, or is told them by their superiors ; — are very far from wishing any hurt to the commonwealth, and not much nearer in abilities to do it any real service : — in fine, such as may be call'd real passives in human life, who are govern'd by what they think is the judgment of others, without making the least use of that with which God has endow'd themselves.

The king had been that day at the parliament house, being the first time of his going there since his return to England, and on this joyful occasion artificers had thrown aside their tools, — shopkeepers had leap'd from behind their compters to be spectators of the royal pomp ; — all the conversation among the company

company I now was with, at least all I could distinctly hear, (for it must be observ'd there were many speakers at the same time) turn'd on these important points: — how well his majesty look'd, — what cloaths he had on, — and who were the noblemen that attended him: — one boasted he had been so near the state-coach that he could with ease have touch'd the king's garments as he stepp'd in; — another, that he had got into the guard-chamber, and saw the procession pass the whole length of the room; — a third, that a friend had introduced him where his majesty put on his robes and crown; — a fourth, that he had seen him feated on the throne: — in fine, there were several who had received honours that day such as had left a glee upon their countenances, which perhaps a statute of bankruptcy the next would scarce have remov'd.

But what most diverted me was a poor grocer, who, on being being ask'd if he had seen the king, shook his head, and in a very piteous tone made this reply:

‘ Sure never any thing happen'd so
‘ cursedly unlucky; — just as I had taken
‘ up my hat and cane to go, an imper-
‘ tinent ill-starr'd customer came in for
‘ sugar,

‘ sugar, and oblig’d me to pull down
‘ half the loaves in my shop for her to
‘ chuse which she lik’d best ; — then
‘ ask’d for spices of three or four diffe-
‘ rent sorts ; — then half a dozen of jar-
‘ raisons and a pound of almonds. — I
‘ told her I would send the things home
‘ immediately to her house ; but she
‘ would needs see them all pack’d up be-
‘ fore she left the shop ; — all this took
‘ up so much time, that before I had
‘ quite done the second guns went off ;
‘ and I knew that if I ran that moment
‘ to the Park, his majesty would be at St.
‘ James’s before I could get to Spring-
‘ garden gate.’

A grave old gentleman, who all this while had sat mute in a corner of the room, on hearing what was said, rose from his place, and approaching the grocer with a sort of contemptuous sneer, address’d himself to him in the following terms :

‘ You have met with a very grievous
‘ disappointment indeed, mr. Fig ; — it
‘ is not, however, without its consola-
‘ tions ; — I dare answer the profit in the
‘ goods you have sold to that imperti-
‘ nent customer, will enable you to make
‘ a good pudding for your family next
‘ Sunday,

Sunday, which is as much, at least, as you could have got by the shew, even though you were to have been paid for your huzzas : — but if this consideration should seem too trifling, I can add another of more weight ; — it is this, — by being hinder'd from running after the king's coach-wheels, you got something towards the payment of your share of the taxes for the support of his government ; and this, as I take it, is the best proof that you or any good subject can give of your allegiance, except your vote and interest at an election.'

He said no more, nor waited to hear what sort of reply might have been made to his reprimand, but threw down two-pence for his dish of coffee and went directly out of the room.

Every one had stared all the time he had been speaking, with their mouths open as tho' they could eat him, though none had offer'd to interrupt him ; but they no sooner saw his back turn'd, than they all at once burst out into a horse-laugh, and cry'd, — ‘ A grumbletonian, — a grumbletonian, — a malecontent, — a disaffected person I warrant.’

I had no inclination to be a witness what farther comments would be made on the old gentleman's behaviour, but follow'd his example, and left a company in which I found nothing capable either of improving or entertaining me ; nor should I have made any mention of this incident, but to remind the populous how ridiculous it is in a man of business to run gadding after every public shew that presents itself, while the necessary provision for his family is left neglected.

From thence I went to the house of an elderly lady, with whom I formerly had been acquainted ; she was at that time look'd upon as a pattern of piety and prudence :— fathers, — husbands, — brothers— all who had any concern for the virtue and reputation of the female part of their family, recommended her example for their imitation ; — but at last, after a long series of the most laudable and becoming actions, she at once degenerated into the very reverse of what she had been ; — fell into all the fashionable follies of the times, at an age when others are beginning to grow weary of them, and commenced a coquette at sixty-five.

I had been told such things, in relation to her conduct, as seemed to me too unaccountable to be believed; and was extremely sorry to find, in the visit I now made her, all those reports confirm'd by the testimony of my own senses.

This lady, whom I shall distinguish by the name of Lamia, sets an high value upon herself for her great skill at picquet; — she challeng'd Grizelda, another antiquated belle, who also pretends to be an adept in that science, to play with her for an hundred guineas the first four games in six; — the other loved money, and, not doubting she should come off conqueror, readily embraced the proposal; and the night agreed upon between them for the decision of this event, happen'd to be that in which I went.

Grizelda came to the door just as I did, so I slipp'd in behind and follow'd her up stairs, where she was received by Lamia with the greatest politeness and shew of affection:—till supper was served up, the discourse between them was only compliments on each other's beauty and good fancy in the choice of their cloaths, which were indeed very elegant, and would have been no less becoming had time stood still in

in his course some forty or fifty years:— the cloth was no sooner removed than the card-table was call'd for, and orders given that whoever came that night should be deny'd access, both these ladies having their own reasons, as I soon after perceiv'd, that there should be no witnessess of what they were about to do.

The ladies sat opposite to each other,— I placed myself at the end of the table, that being between them I might have the better opportunity of observing what both did: — they were now very serious and attentive to the business they were upon; — play'd, or rather cheated each other with great caution; for I soon perceived that it was in this latter part of the art of gaming that the excellence of either chiefly consisted.

For a time each was so taken up with her own petites fourberies as not to have leisure to observe those practised by her adversary; — at last, however, Lamia having retaken in a card she had laid out, Grizelda perceiv'd it, and accused her of the change: — rage and disdain, on finding herself detected, made the cheeks of the other glow with a deeper scarlet than the carmine had given them; and her eyes, even in despight of age, sparkle with fires

fires which love and youth had never power to fill them with : — the other was no less enflamed ; — but their resentment will best be shewn in the expressions made use of by themselves.

Lamia. ‘ I am surprised you can suspect me guilty of so mean a thing as cheating at cards ; — sure you cannot think I value the trifle we are playing for. — What is an hundred guineas to me ? — I regard an hundred no more than a pinch of snuff.

Grizelda. ‘ Madam, I value an hundred guineas as little as yourself ; — but I hate to be imposed upon.

Lamia. ‘ What do you mean, madam, — do you say I have imposed upon you ?

Grizelda. ‘ I say you would have done it, madam, if my eyes had not been quicker than your hands.

Lamia. ‘ Madam, I scorn your words ; and if you were not in my own house should tell you that you lyed.

Grizelda. ‘ And if it were not in respect to your age, madam, I should tell you that

‘ that you were a base woman, and had
invited me hither only to cheat me of
my money.

Lamia. ‘ My age, — good luck, —
my age, — I leave the world to judge
which of us two looks the oldest. — I
beg, madam, you will not deceive your-
self: — it is not your long false locks,
hanging dangling on each side your
face, that hide the wrinkles of it.

Grizelda. ‘ I wear no plumpers, madam,
— Do you not remember when one of
yours dropt out of your mouth at lady
Betty’s drawing-room how all the com-
pany were frighted at you, and cry’d
out you had lost half your face ?

I started on hearing this reproach of Grizelda, being at that time utterly unacquainted with the meaning of it;—but as it is highly probable that a great many of my readers may be as ignorant in this point as myself then was, I shall explain it by giving a direction of the use and preparation of plumpers, as I have since received it from the waiting-maid of a woman of condition.

A sure way to help LANK CHEEKS.

“ TAKE a piece of the finest, cleanest sponge you can get, — cut out of it two small bolsters, and place them between your cheeks and teeth, if you have any, if not the gums will serve to keep them up; — on taking them out of your mouth, going to bed, throw them into a tea-cup of rose or orange-flower water, and let them soke all night; — this will not only cleanse them from whatever impurities they may have happen'd to have received, but will also give a delectable flavour to the breath. — Probatum est.”

These ladies pursued their mutual altercations for a considerable time, in a fashion which the intelligent reader may easily conceive by the sample I have given; — I shall therefore only say, that after having charg'd each other with all the vices and foibles that either of them could think of, they at last quarrell'd themselves into a reconciliation, — begg'd each others pardon, and went to play a second time; — then fell out again, and provocations on both sides being renew'd, and reproaches still growing more piquant, Lamia tore the cards and threw

them into the fire ; — Grizelda call'd for her chair and left the house in a great fury ; — I gladly follow'd her out, being heartily sick of what I had seen between these fair, or rather unfair antagonists ; but had no opportunity of getting away before, as the door had never once been open'd.

It was now near two hours past midnight, and I found more satisfaction in the thoughts of going to my repose than in those discoveries my Invisibility had entertain'd me with. — I was making all the speed I could to my apartment for that purpose, — but fate decreed it otherwise, and had contrived an accident which renew'd all my former curiosity : — in my way home I pass'd through the street where Marcella lived, and the sight of her house bringing fresh into my mind what the Morning had presented, I could not keep myself from stopping short to make some reflections on the conduct of that fair fallen angel.

‘ She is doubtless by this time in the arms of her beloved Fillamour, said I to myself, and while revelling in the pleasures of a loose inclination, forgets all sense of honour, — duty, — fame, and even what is owing to the merit of those

‘ those charms nature has endow’d her
‘ with ; — and oh, — strange paradox of
‘ a vicious flame ! — renders herself cheap
‘ and contemptible in the eyes of the
‘ very man whose esteem she most wishes
‘ to preserve.’

How long I should have remain’d in this resvery I know not ; but I was rous’d from it by the sudden appearance of Celadon, who with a light carry’d before him came hastily down the street and knock’d at his own door : — to see him return at a time when I knew he was so little expected, made me not doubt but that he had receiv’d some information of the injury done him, and came in order to detect and revenge himself on the guilty pair : — I trembled for poor Marcella ; but what grounds I had to do so, as well as the event of this night’s transaction, must be left to the next chapter.



C H A P. IV.

Concludes an adventure of a very singular nature in its consequences.

THE anxiety I was under to know what would become of poor Marcella, immediately determin'd me to follow her husband into the house. — A manservant not having obey'd his lady's commands in going to bed, having something or other wherewith to employ himself in his own room, on hearing somebody at the door look'd through the window, and perceiving it was his master flew down stairs and gave him entrance on the first knock.

Rachel, who had been posted centry in a back-parlour, in order to watch the break of day, and conduct Fillamour out of the house before any of the family were stirring, now came running out on hearing the street door open'd ; but scarce could an apparition have spread a greater terror through her whole frame than did the sight of Celadon at this juncture.

Rachel.

Rachel. ‘ Lord, sir, who could have
thought your honour would have come
home to night ?

Celadon. ‘ I did not design it, indeed ;
— but is it so strange a thing that a
man should change his mind ?’

In speaking this he was passing on, but
she threw herself between him and the foot
of the stairs, and catching fast hold of the
sleeve of his coat, prevented him from
going up, with these words :

Rachel. ‘ Oh, dear sir, I beg you will
not disturb my lady ;—she is gone to
bed very much discomposed :—pray be
so good as to step into the parlour, —
there is a good fire,—and I will go and
see if she is awake, and tell her you are
here.

Celadon. ‘ My wife ill!—What is the
matter with her ?

Rachel. ‘ I do not know, sir, but she
was seiz’d with a sort of a — I can’t tell
the name of it,—indeed not I ;—but I
believe it was something like a fit, —
and so, sir, she went to bed ; but I will
go and let her know you are come.

Celadon. ‘ No, no, — she may be asleep, and it would be a pity to wake her ; — therefore I’ll take your advice, mrs. Rachel, and sit a little in the parlour. — Tom, do you go to bed, — I shall not want any thing to night.’

The fellow did as he was commanded ; and I could easily perceive, by Rachel’s countenance, that she was upon the wing to be gone too, impatient, I suppose, to apprise Marcella of what had happen’d, and assist her in contriving some means for concealing her gallant ; — but whatever her thoughts were, Celadon had that moment got something in his head which effectually prevented any schemes she might otherwise have laid for securing the honour of her lady ; — Tom was no sooner gone than Celadon took hold of both her hands and drew her gently into the parlour, with these words :

Celadon. ‘ Come, pretty mrs. Rachel, if I am so complaisant to my wife’s disorder as to refrain going to bed to her, I think that I may very well be allow’d the pleasure of your company, by way of consolation.

Rachel.

Rachel. ‘ Oh dear, sir, what pleasure
‘ can you find in the company of such a
‘ one as I ?

Celadon. ‘ As much as I can wish ; —
‘ come sit down, — nay, you shall sit by
‘ me ; — now we are alone there is no oc-
‘ casion for all this distance between us,
‘ — I have a great deal to say to you ; —
‘ nothing sure was ever so lucky as my
‘ coming home to night ; — all I could
‘ have found in the journey I proposed
‘ would not have afforded me the thou-
‘ sandth part of the satisfaction I now en-
‘ joy in this private interview with my
‘ dear girl : — in fine, I like you, — I love
‘ you, — and have long’d almost ever
‘ since you came into the family for an
‘ opportunity to tell you so.

Rachel. ‘ Lord, sir, how can your
‘ honour talk so, — who have so fine a
‘ lady of your own ?

Celadon. ‘ I like my wife very well as
‘ a wife ; but there is something in the
‘ tyes of marriage which quite suffocate
‘ and choak up all those desires which can
‘ alone give any relish to enjoyment.—A
‘ man goes to bed to his wife as he goes
‘ to court, because it is the fashion, and

‘ a sort of duty which is expected from
‘ him ; and he cannot, without being ill
‘ look’d upon by the world, be dispensed
‘ from ; but flies to the arms of his mi-
‘ stress as to a delicious retreat, the choice
‘ of his own fancy, and well stored with
‘ all that can regale the senses.

Rachel. ‘ Lord, sir, how strangely you
‘ talk to one ! — I wish your honour
‘ would let me go up stairs to see how
‘ my lady does.

Celadon. ‘ No, indeed, I shall not suf-
‘ fer you to be so uncharitable as to run
‘ away and leave me alone here ; — if my
‘ wife wants any thing she will ring her
‘ Bell, — in the mean time, let us make
‘ each other as happy as we can.—Come,
‘ none of this coyness ; — let me tell
‘ you, child, that too much reserve in
‘ private with a man who loves you, and
‘ has it in his power to make your for-
‘ tune, is as unbecoming as too much
‘ familiarity would be in public ; — you
‘ may depend upon it, that whatever fa-
‘ vours you bestow on me shall be re-
‘ turn’d with others no less agreeable to
‘ yourself. — I know very well how a
‘ person of my station ought to behave
‘ towards one of yours in these cases, and
‘ shall act accordingly.’

Rachel

Rachel made no reply to all this; — but hung down her head and look'd extremely silly,—not that she wanted either wit or assurance on other occasions; but at present she was quite at a loss; and it must be own'd, indeed, that such a crisis afforded sufficient to perplex her on a double score; — first, — the improbability, and even impossibility there appear'd of concealing her lady's secret, which, if discovered, might prove of the most fatal consequence, had thrown her into, and still kept her in the utmost distraction of mind:—and, secondly, surprised at the unexpected offer made to her by her master, join'd with the uncertainty in what manner she should receive it, might very well put her into agitations, such as to render her incapable of contriving any thing on her mistress's account, or resolving what to do on her own.

Celadon, interpreting her silence as a half consent to his desires, began now to add kisses and embraces to his solicitations; — the warmth with which he press'd her soon wrought the effect it was intended for; though I easily perceiv'd the most prevailing argument he made use of was taking out his purse and pouring twenty guineas into her lap.

The transport which sparkled in the eyes of this mercenary creature, on beholding the glittering bait, put me immediately in mind of what mr. Dryden makes Jupiter say in his play of *Ampytrion*:

When I made
This gold, I made a greater god than
Jove,
And gave my own omnipotence away.

But it is little to be wonder'd at that a girl, such as this Rachel, should fall prostrate before that reigning idol of the world, who has for its votaries not only men of the greatest parts and abilities, but also too many among those who make the highest professions of honour, probity, and virtue; — nay, I am sorry to say, of religion: — daily experience, however, and a very small observation of the corruption of the present age evinces this melancholy truth. — But to return,

The amorous Celadon now finding her all dissolv'd, and soften'd to his purpose, proceeded to the greatest familiarities: — there was no bed, nor even couch in the room; but, — as the poet says,

“ Many

- ‘ Many a nymph has on the floor been
‘ spread,
- ‘ And much good love without a
‘ feather-bed.

So finding a scene was likely to ensue, which it was not agreeable to my inclination, or any way proper that I should be witness of, I withdrew into an adjacent parlour, which having a communication with this, and the door between them not being quite shut, I open’d wide enough to gain a passage, while the lovers backs were turn’d towards that side of the room.

Solitude, — darkness, and the profound silence of every thing about me, here contributed to promote the most solemn meditations ; — I reflected on the extreme folly, as well as wickedness, of giving way to an inordinate gratification of the senses, and the certain danger, and almost certain infamy, which attends the doing so ; — on this occasion several passages and accidents relating to many of my acquaintance occurr’d fresh to my mind ; and when I remember’d how some, who had been endow’d by heaven and fortune with every requisite, excepting virtue, to complete their happiness,

yet by the want of that alone had exposed themselves to a condition the most abject and contemptible to which a reasonable being can possibly be reduced, I could not forbear crying out with the inimitable Cowley,

‘ All this world’s noise appears to me,
‘ But as a dull, ill-acted comedy.

While I was thus ruminating, and wondering within myself what would be the consequence of this night’s transaction, I perceiv’d, through the crevices of the window shutters, that the day began to break, and presently after heard a certain rustling upon the stairs ; — it was occasion’d by Marcella and Fillamour, who, on finding Rachel did not come up as they expected, and the light was pretty far advancing, were creeping softly down, — the noise Marcella made in unfastening the chain that went across the street-door wak’d Celadon and Rachel, who it seems had both fallen asleep ; the former, on hearing the noise, was running out of the parlour to see what was the matter ; but Rachel prevented him, by saying she was sure it was only one of the footmen who went out more early than ordinary to the stable ; — this excuse might have solved

solved all, if Marcella herself had not unluckily been her own betrayer.

That lady, incensed beyond measure, push'd open the door of the room where I was, and rush'd through it into that where Rachel was order'd to attend, beginning to upbraid before she saw her.

Marcella. ‘ So, minx,—you have serv'd
me finely; — it is almost broad day,
— I have knock'd the heel of my shoe
almost off, for I would not ring for
fear of alarming the family; — I sup-
pose you have been asleep: — this it
is to place any dependance on servants..

Celadon, on hearing his wife's voice before she enter'd, had stepp'd behind a screen, either suspecting something of the truth, or because he was unwilling to be surprized with Rachel at that hour; and Rachel, doubly confounded between her lady's reproaches and the knowledge who was witness of them, that she was utterly unable to speak one word for some time, but shook her head, —wink'd, and pointed to the screen, thinking, by those significant gestures, to prevent Marcella from saying any thing farther, 'till finding she was again opening her mouth, she recover'd herself enough to cry out:

Rachel..

Rachel. ‘ Lord, madam, — do not stand talking here, you will certainly get cold and make yourself worse; — consider you are half naked; — pray go to bed again.

Marcella. ‘ What does the wench mean? but I suppose you have been at the ratifie bottle and stupified yourself, according to custom. — Well, ’tis your own loss; for I dare swear Fillamour would have given you no less a present than five guineas for your diligence, if you had come up as you ought to have done; — tis now quite light in the street, and a thousand to one but some of the neighbours may have seen him go out.

Celadon coming forward. ‘ So, madam, I find you have been diverting yourself, and Fillamour is the man to whom I am oblig’d for giving you consolation in my absence.’

That person must know very little of nature, who does not easily conceive what Marcella felt in so shocking a juncture; — surprise, shame, and vexation for having thus foolishly expos’d her guilt, quite overwhelm’d her heart, — she gave a great shriek, and sunk, half fainting, into a chair;

chair;—Rachel ran to her assistance, and at the same time willing to retrieve, if possible, told Celadon that he must not take any notice of her lady's words;—that she went very ill to bed;—that she was delirious, and knew not what she said.—This, however, had no effect upon him,—he was too well convinced of the injury had been done him, and loaded his transgressing wife with every invective that a husband, in his circumstances, could invent.

But certainly it is impossible for any woman to behave with greater courage and resolution than Marcella now did;—she presently regain'd her spirits; and, after having made Rachel leave the room, a moment's reflection served her to reply to the reproaches made her by her husband, in these terms:

Marcella. ‘ Well, sir, I confess appearances are against me, nor do I wonder at, nor will resent the asperity of your treatment;—though guilty of no real crime, my vanity has led me into a folly which merits all you have said to me.—I have not, in fact, dishonour'd either myself or you, and my behaviour this night has only mortified the pride and arrogance of a man who would have

‘ have rival’d you in my esteem and affection.

Celadon. ‘ So you went to bed to him, merely to convince him of your esteem and affection for me ?

Marcella. ‘ Yes, incongruous as it may seem, I did so ; — I had heard that the vain fellow boasted no woman could resist him, if once he had an opportunity to press his suit : — on this I resolv’d to give him one as full as he could ask, or man obtain, — I admitted him into my chamber ; — nay, into my bed, — listen’d to all the arguments he could urge to work me to his will ; and, when his whole stock of rhetoric, on that occasion, was exhausted, shew’d him that the wife of Celadon could love no other man : — I repulsed him in a manner which made him ashame of his attempt ; — but had he not been so, and had proceeded to gain by force those favours I refused to grant, Rachel was planted here, in order to come up to my assistance and prevent his efforts.

Celadon. ‘ Excellent, i’faith, — beyond imagination ; — I have been told, indeed, that a woman need but look down upon her apron-string to find an excuse for

• for the most enormous crime she can be
• guilty of ; but this of yours is such a
• one as cannot fail of giving a good
• deal of diversion in a court of judi-
• cature ; tho' I scarce think it will save
• either Fillamour's estate from the pe-
• nalty the law inflicts on an attempt to
• bastardize an honourable family, or his
• throat from the justice of my sword.'

The boldness of Marcella was not to be aw'd by these menaces ; — she found he had too much understanding to be imposed upon by the shallow artifice she had made use of ; that he now heartily despis'd her, and that she had no longer any measures to preserve with him ; — therefore, collecting all the courage she was mistress of, she threw her eyes upon him with a contempt equal to that with which he look'd upon her, and made him this reply :

Marcella. ‘ ’Tis mighty well, sir, —
‘ you are at your liberty to make use of
‘ all the weapons you fancy are in your
‘ power for revenge ; but I would have
‘ you remember, that whether Fillamour
‘ cuts your throat, or you cut his, and
‘ are hang'd for it, the matter will be of
‘ little importance to me : — and as for a
‘ court of judicature, I believe you will
‘ find

‘ find it very difficult to make good any accusations you may exhibit against me there : — no one ever saw me in bed with Fillamour, much less can prove any criminal conversation between us, so that the ridicule would turn wholly upon yourself ; and, perhaps, provoke me, as I have had no child by you, to bring in a bill of impotency, in which case I should have all my fortune return’d, — a thing your present circumstances would not very well bear, as some part of your estate is already mortgaged.’

To all this Celadon was able to make no other reply, than that he stood amazed at her audacity ; — that he found she was abandon’d to all sense of shame ; that she was a monster of impudence, and such like ; at which she seemed not in the least mov’d, but proceeded to reason with him in the same determin’d fashion she had began.

Marcella. ‘ Look you, Celadon, all the fury you can be possess’d of will remedy nothing ; — let us argue like rational creatures : — whatever opinion we may have of each other, the only way to preserve either of our characters is to live well together in the eyes of the world ;

' world ;—I tell you that I am innocent,
' and it is for your ease and interest, as
' well as mine, that you should believe
' I am so ; which if you do, I faithfully
' promise to regulate my conduct in such
' a manner as to bring no disreputation
' on myself or dishonour to you ; — but
' if you fly into extremes you will oblige
' me to do the same, and what but our
' mutual infamy and destruction can be
' the end of such a contest ? I leave you
' to consider on what I have said, and
' wait your cooler moments for an an-
' swer.'

With these words she went hastily out of the room ; — Celadon offer'd not to detain her, but continued walking backwards and forwards, testifying, by several disordered gestures, the inward agitations of his mind ;—after some moments pass'd in the silent expressions of his rage, he call'd to the servants, most of whom were now stirring, to get a bed prepared for him in another chamber ; but I am of opinion, that when he retired thither, it was less to sleep than to reflect how it would best become him to behave under the shocking circumstance he was now involved in.

Finding no farther discoveries were likely to be made at this time, I left the house on the first opening of the street-door and return'd home; where, fatigued as I was for want of rest, the astonishment I was in at the behaviour of Marcella would not suffer the least slumber to close my eyes.

For some days I was extremely impatient to know the result of this affair; but hearing no talk of it about town, began to conclude that the wife's arguments had prevail'd, and the husband had submitted his resentment to his convenience; — I soon found I was not deceived in my conjectures, for in less than a week I saw Celadon and Marcella taking the air together in their own coach, with the same appearance of serenity in both their countenances as if nothing of the adventure I have been relating had ever happen'd.



C H A P. V.

Contains the history of a distress, which, according to the author's private opinion, is much more likely to excite laughter than commiseration.

MELISSA, by all who know her, is accounted one of the most vain of her sex: — true, — she is so; — but then her vanity appears to me to be of a species far different from that which other women are ordinarily possess'd of; — her glass, whenever she looks into it, which is not seldom, presents her with the view of ten thousand graces; — she sees very well that she is handsome, — finely shaped, — and has something peculiarly engaging in her mien and air; — yet does she not plume herself on the perfections she is mistress of, or is at all thankful to nature for having bestowed them on her; — this some people at first may think is the very reverse of vanity, yet is it in effect the quintessence of it; — the case is, that she would be the only fair, — the only lovely, — the only Venus, — the sole object of attracting universal love and admiration; and every single charm
she

she finds in any other face, gives her more pain than all those in her own can give her satisfaction.

Every little regard, or act of compunction, paid to another in her presence, she looks upon as a kind of indignity to herself, and is a mortal stab to her pride; and, as it is impossible for her not to meet frequently with such shocks, she is perpetually racking all the invention she is mistress of to render herself more conspicuous, and to force, as it were, that attention which she finds her beauty alone is insufficient to excite.

I had heard at full the character of this fine court belle, — had been several times in her company, and seen verified all I had been told concerning the extravagance of her humour; — yet, I know not how it happen'd, but passing by her house, and seeing a good number of chairs and livery servants about the door, I stepp'd in and went directly up to her drawing-room, where I found her encircled by about a dozen persons of distinction of both sexes.

It was the evening before the birthday, and when I enter'd, the conversation among them turn'd wholly on the ode
com-

composed by mr. Cibber on that occasion, most of them having heard the rehearsal of it ; but soon after they fell on the more important subject of dress, — every one discanting on the fancies of all her acquaintance, finding a thousand faults, and no one thing to approve, each concluding what she had to say with an, — ‘ I wonder people of fashion can have such vulgar tastes.’ — The gentlemen also, in complaisance to the ladies, affected to be connoisseurs in this point, and ridiculing all that were absent gave no praises but to the present, as will appear by the speeches made by some of them.

Beau Civet. ‘ Indeed, ladies, I think dress is the only true touch-stone of a fine woman’s genius ; and she who is indelicate in that, igad, must be so in every thing else.

Monsieur La Mot. ‘ I have the honour to be entirely of your opinion, sir, — nothing can be more just than the observation you have made ; — yet certainly an elegance of dress is a thing so little understood, that I believe out of this room there are scarce three women in the kingdom who know how to set themselves off to any advantage.

Melissa. ‘ As to that, monsieur, — a woman who is really agreeable need be at no pains to appear so ; — but I detest every thing that is common ; — I hate your gold and silver stuffs, — your brocades, — your velvets, — and embroideries ; — you see them upon the backs of every one who has either money or credit to purchase them.

Lesbia. ‘ That is true, indeed, my dear ; but if you exclude all these things, what in the name of wonder can a woman of condition find proper to appear in at court ?

Melissa. ‘ Oh there are a thousand pretty whims ; — Do you not remember, that on my first going to the drawing-room after the Prince’s mourning was over, I had a gause mantau and petticoat, flourished with twenty different colours ; — every one was charm’d with the oddness of the fancy.

Lesbia. ‘ Yes, I remember it very well, and that the weather being pretty cool you got a sore throat which confin’d you to your chamber for ten days afterwards. — For my part, I think one ought

• ought always to suit one's cloaths ac-
• cording to the season of the year.

Melissa. ‘ Then I suppose you will be
• draw'd forth to-morrow in some heavy
• brocade or other.

Lesbia. ‘ No, — I shall have only a
• rose-colour'd damask, flounced with a
• point d'espagne.’

On this, two or three of the other ladies gave a description of the habits they had prepared to do honour to the ensuing august day; but Melissa mention'd not a word of what she intended to wear, till being ask'd the question, she told them that she should have only a slight fattin, not strip'd, — not either flower'd in the loom nor embroider'd with the needle, yet it would be such as she doubted not but would attract the eyes of the whole assembly upon it.

She had no sooner ended these words, than lady Twinckle, who had not spoke before, cried out, — ‘ Nobody can doubt
• the excellence of your fancy;—but yet,
• my dear, I believe I shall have the plea-
• sure of dividing with you the attention
• of the company; for I shall have a suit

‘ of cloaths which will certainly appear
‘ the geatest oddity that ever was seen.’

Every mouth in the room, except my own, was now open to entreat her ladyship to give them some idea of this curiosity :—she had too much good-nature to refuse their request, and presently made this answer :

Lady *Twinkle*. ‘ I will not be so vain as to assume the merit of the invention ; — no, it was brought to me on the wheel of fortune, — a mere accident, — I only improved the hint, as you shall see ; for I will send both for the petticoat and the piece of silk from which I took the pattern.’

She said no more, but starting from her seat ran directly to the head of the stair-case, — called her servant, who was waiting below, and ordered him to go home and fetch the things she had mention’d ; — as her house was no farther off than the next street, the fellow return’d immediately with them :—the bundle was no sooner brought into the room than she open’d it, and shew’d the company about a yard of white sattin, painted in water colours, with cupids, some flying, others standing, but all of them with their bows extended

extended as if to shoot at hearts, which were every where scatter'd, in a careless manner, upon the piece.

There was no time for one syllable to be utter'd, either in praise or dispraise of this pretty fancy ; — the moment lady Twinckle had spread it on a table Melissa sent forth a loud shriek, which, together with the exclamations that ensued, threw every one into the utmost astonishment.

Melissa. ‘ Confusion,—distraction,—is
‘ it possible!—What can this mean, ma-
‘ dam? that piece of silk is mine, as well
‘ as the invention painted upon it. Pray
‘ how came it into your ladyship’s pos-
‘ session?—But wherefore need I ask, —
‘ the case is plain enough, — that villain
‘ Pencil, after the handsome present I
‘ had made him for secrecy, over and
‘ above paying him for his work, has
‘ most cruelly betray’d me, exposed my
‘ contrivance to you, and ruin’d my
‘ design.

Lady Twinckle. ‘ I am strangely sur-
‘ prised ; — sure this is the oddest thing
‘ that ever happen’d.—Indeed, my dear,
‘ I little thought that I was shewing you
‘ your own ;—but I would not have you

‘ lay the blame on mr. Pencil ; — upon
‘ my honour the poor man is perfectly
‘ innocent in what you accuse him of ;
‘ for though I was at his shop one day
‘ last week, and bought a five guinea
‘ fan of him, he never once mention’d
‘ your name, or that he had been em-
‘ ploy’d by you in any work : — but I will
‘ tell you the whole matter ; — my wo-
‘ man, you must know, wanting some-
‘ thing to new robe a gown I had lately
‘ given her, went among the piece-brokers
‘ behind St. Clement’s church, where she
‘ made a purchase of this remnant ; — on
‘ her bringing it home I was vastly taken
‘ with the whim, and resolved to have
‘ something like it for a birth-day suit ;
‘ — accordingly I set a fan-painter to
‘ work upon the pattern, only directed
‘ him to make some few alterations,
‘ which you shall be judge whether for
‘ the better or not.

Melissa. ‘ Then it is by the mantua-
‘ maker I have been thus basely used.—
‘ I could forgive the wretch for stealing
‘ my silk ; — I know those creatures
‘ make it a part of their trade to do
‘ so, and will rather spoil one’s cloaths
‘ than lose what they look upon as their
‘ perquisites ; and for that reason I al-
‘ ways allow five or six yards more than
‘ is

‘ is necessary ; — but to be so hasty in
‘ the disposal of her theft,—to let what I
‘ had invented on purpose to be par-
‘ ticular be seen in the shop of a com-
‘ mon piece-broker, before I had worn it
‘ myself, is such a piece of impudence as
‘ deserves, and shall meet with all the
‘ mischief I can do her.’

No reply was made to what she said ;— lady Twinckle had by this time unfolded her petticoat, the sight of which sufficiently employ'd every eye and tongue in the room ; — that lady had indeed greatly improv'd upon Melissa's fancy ; for besides the ground of the fattin being all over frosted, as it were, with silver, the wings of the cupids and the barbs of their arrows were much better delineated, and the hearts dispersed in a more elegant manner ; — Melissa, at sight of it, was ready to swoon, and the high commendations she heard given of it by the whole company increased her disorder. — Monsieur La Mot, happening to turn his head that way, and perceiving the confusion she was in, thought to remedy it by making her the following compliment :

Monsieur *La Mot.* ‘ Well, madam,
‘ whatever praises lady Twinckle may
‘ at first receive on account of this most

‘ agreeable whim, they will afterwards naturally recoil on you, as being the first inventor.

Lady *Twinkle*. ‘ Indeed I shall do Melissa the justice to acknowledge it.

Melissa. ‘ Oh, madam, your ladyship need not give yourself any trouble about the matter; for I shall neither go to court to-morrow, nor ever put the cloaths upon my back.

Lady *Twinkle*. ‘ I am sorry, my dear, to find you are so much disconcerted, especially as I know myself the innocent occasion.—But sure my having a gown something like yours will not hinder you from paying your obedience to the royal presence.

Melissa. ‘ Since I am so unlucky to be frustrated in my expectation, I do not chuse to appear in a thing so exactly of the same design, and so inferior in the execution, to that your ladyship will have on; therefore shall not attempt to divide with you any part of the attention of the assembly.

Lesbia. ‘ What a pity it is one has not the same liberty of going to court as to

‘ a mas-

‘ a masquerade, in an antic habit, — if so, you might have render’d yourself as conspicuous as a certain lady of our acquaintance did at the Venetian Ball in the character of Iphigenia.’

Here ensued a general laughter, and the conduct of that lady hinted at by Lesbia gave occasion to many sarcasms, which I forbear to repeat on account of their severity.—Melissa, however, in spite of her known talent for satire, was entirely silent on the subject, than which there could not be a greater proof how much her mind was taken up with the accident that had befallen herself.

It required, indeed, no great share of penetration to discover that it was with the utmost difficulty this disappointed belle restrained her ill humour within the bounds of decency while the company staid ; but they had no sooner taken leave than she gave a loose to all the agitations she was possess’d of, and burst into such extravagancies of grief and rage, that whoever had seen her, without knowing the cause, must have imagin’d some fatal chance had deprived her of all the friends and fortune she had to boast of in the world.

Awhile she wept, and utter'd the most piteous lamentations ; — then rav'd and call'd hastily for the unlucky garment that had been the cause of her present woe ; — she stamp'd it under her feet upon the floor ; — then snatching it up cry'd, — ‘ The sight of it never shall offend me more ; ’ — and with these words was about to throw it upon the fire ; but her maid, who was a quick-witted sprightly girl, catch'd hold of her arm, and prevented her from doing what she design'd, with this Remonstrance :

Maid. ‘ Dear madam, do not quite demolish this pretty gown ; — if you resolve never to wear it, you may make it into charming furniture : — besides, a thought is just now come into my head, how some part of it may afford you an ample revenge on lady Twinckle for stealing your invention.

Melissa. ‘ Revenge ! — oh that it were in my power : — but tell me how, — by what means can I accomplish it ?

Maid. ‘ Firſt, let me know, madam, whether you can remember exactly the alterations made by lady Twinckle ?

Melissa.

Melissa. ‘ O, yes perfectly well : —
the sight of that detested petticoat, me-
thinks, is still before my eyes.

Maid. ‘ Well then, madam, if you
approve of the contrivance, I will take
as much out of the tail of the gown as
will make a robe de chambre for the
monkey ; — you must give mr. Pencil
directions to change the pattern just like
lady Twinckle’s ; — if he sits up all
night about it, a small present will make
him amends ; and I will undertake to
run up the habit, and a head-dress and
three double ruffles, time enough for
Pug to make her appearance when the
ladies are going into court.

Melissa. ‘ Thou would’st not carry her
thither ?

Maid. ‘ Not into the palace, madam ;
— tho’ tis possible there may be as ill-
figures there ; — but my intention is to
attend lady Pug into the Mall, — saunter
about with her in St. James’s piazza,,
and towards the foot of the great stairs,
where all the company go up : — I
warrant we shall have eyes enough
upon us.

Melissa. ‘ Sure there never was such a charming plot:—dear girl, I could almost kiss thee for it; — to see the monkey below, and lady Twinckle above in just the same livery, — oh ! it will be a lasting jest, and turn all the admiration she expects into ridicule; — but no time is to be lost, — let John run this instant to mr. Pencil’s, and find him wherever he is; — a second disappointment would quite break my heart.’

The waiting-maid flew to do as she was commanded, and I retired at the same time, smiling within myself to have seen how much it is in the power of the smallest trifle, relating to dress and ornament, to discompose a woman whose sole ambition is to attract public admiration.

I had the curiosity, however, to go the next day about one o’clock to St. James’s, where I found the plot I had heard concerted was carry’d into execution ; — Melissa’s monkey, attended by her maid, were there before me ; and certainly a more diverting sight could not be seen ; — the girl had, indeed, discover’d an uncommon ingenuity in the management of this affair ; — she had not only decorated

rated madam Pug in all the punctilio's of a fine lady, but also dexterously fasten'd the fore limbs close to its sides, to prevent it either from jumping or affronting its new quality by going upon all four; so that the little creature walk'd erect and stately on its hind feet amidst a crowd of laughing spectators, led by its careful conductress by a piece of broad white ribband fixed to the neck of the robe de chambre: — most of the ladies, and several gentlemen stopp'd in their chairs to pay their compliments to the burlesque belle; and no small notice was taken of the figures painted on the garment.

On this I could not doubt but the contrivance would have all the success aim'd at by Melissa and her maid, and was afterwards assured of it by a friend who was that day at court, and told me that a general whisper, accompanied with a sneer, ran through the whole assembly on seeing lady Twinckle's cloaths; — her ladyship, it seems, has since been made fully acquainted with the matter, and is so incensed against Melissa, that she will not come into any place where she is.

C H A P. VI.

Shews, that tho' a remissness of care in the bringing up of children, can scarce fail of being attended with very bad consequences; yet that an over exact circumspection, in minute things, may sometimes prove equally pernicious to their future welfare.

VARIOUS were the reports concerning Alinda, both while she was alive and after her decease; but all the world could say with any certainty, either of her affairs or conduct, might be compriz'd in the following articles:

That she was the only child of a very eminent and wealthy merchant in the city, who, on the death of his wife, left off business, and having purchased an estate of near a thousand pounds a year in the country, retired thither to pass the remainder of his days, taking Alinda with him, at that time about ten years of age.

That through some peculiarities in his temper she was educated in a very odd fashion,

fashion, — secluded from all conversation with the neighbouring gentry, and scarce suffer'd to speak to any one out of their own family.

That after his death, which happen'd in her seventeenth year, she return'd, with the consent of her guardians, to London, — lived in a manner suitable to her fortune, and had many advantageous offers of marriage, all which she rejected without giving any reason for doing so.

That at one and twenty she fell into a wasting disorder, which was judged to proceed rather from some inward grief preying upon her spirits, than from any distemper of the body ; — it baffled, however, all the skill of the physicians, and she expired after a tedious languishment of near three years, leaving the possession of her estate to a nephew of her father's, who was the next of kin.

All these things, I say, were public ; — but as to the motive which made her avoid listening to any proposals for changing her condition, or the cause of that melancholy which brought on her death, every one spoke of them as they thought proper, and according as the dispositions

positions of their own hearts inclined them to judge.

Few, however, were charitable enough to put the best construction on her conduct ;—some said she was a man-hater ;—others, that loving the sex too well she could not think of entering into a state which must confine her to one alone : — those who entertain'd the most favourable opinion, imagined she had unhappily engaged her heart where there was no possibility of a return : — this last conjecture seem'd, indeed, most probable, and gain'd ground after she fell into that heavy languor which excluded her from all those pleasures she had been accustom'd to partake, and at length deprived her of life ; — but all this, to make use of the vulgar adage, was speaking without book,—my Gift of Invisibility gave me alone the means of penetrating into the mystery.

As I had been acquainted with her, and visited her while she continued to see company, I frequently sent, or call'd, to enquire after her health ; — one day when I did so, a servant belonging to her kinsman and heir at law, came to the door at the same time, and we both received for answer, that she expired the night before.

The fellow ran directly to inform his master, to whom these tidings would probably be not unwelcome; and I went home, clapp'd on my Belt of Invisibility, and return'd in a short time to the house of Alinda;—the reader will perhaps wonder for what reason, and it is not fit I should keep him in ignorance..

There was a clergyman lived in the house with her, and perform'd the office of a chaplain; — he was a person who her father having conceived a high opinion of had taken into his family, and set over her in the manner of a preceptor, and he had ever since continued with her; I had several times dined with him at her table, and perceived he professed an extraordinary sanctity and the extremest regard for the welfare of his fair patroness;—and this it was that made me desirous of seeing in what manner he would behave upon her death.

I expected to have found him either in his own chamber, bewailing the early fate of so beneficent a friend, or sitting by her corpse religiously moralizing on the shadowy happiness of this transitory world; but after seeking him in vain, in these and several other rooms, at last I discover'd.

discover'd him in a closet, where I knew she reposit'd her things of greatest value; — he was busily employ'd in rummaging her buree, from the little cell of which I saw him convey, as near as I could guess, between two and three hundred pieces of gold, and several bank bills to a much greater amount; — he then pull'd out a drawer which contain'd her jewels; — he first took up one, — then another, — survey'd them with a greedy eye, but laid them down again and shut the drawer; but, after a moment's pause, open'd it a second time and took out a ring set round with large brilliants, — ‘ I may keep this, cry'd he, it will scarce be miss'd; — or if it be, I can pretend she made me a present of it in her life-time, and nobody will suspect the contrary.’ — Here he gave over his search, lock'd the buree, put the key into his pocket, and went into his own room.

It would be hard for me to determine, whether astonishment or indignation was most predominant in me at this sight; — I wish'd never to have beheld it, or that I had been at liberty to pluck the sacred robe from off the back of that vile prophaner of his order; — I was going away with a mind more troubled than I can well express, when one of Alinda's maids came

came running into the room with a seal'd packet in her hand, and deliver'd it to this disciple of Judas Iscariot, telling him at the same time, that it had been found under her mistress's pillow just after her death ; but that she had forgot in the hurry to bring it to him before.

He reply'd, with an affected indifference, that it was very well ; — that he would look over the papers and take care that whatever injunctions they contain'd should be fulfill'd,—and with these words dismiss'd her.

The superscription on the cover of this packet was to a lady with whom Alinda had been extremely intimate, but had not seen for a considerable time, she being excluded, as well as the rest of her acquaintance, after she fell into that deep melancholy which ended her days ; — the priest immediately broke the seal, and found a little letter to the above mention'd lady, — the contents whereof were as follow :

“ DEAR MADAM,
“ THAT I have not seen you so
“ long has not been owing to want
“ of friendship, but to a resolution of
“ depriving myself of every thing that
“ was

" was agreeable to me in life ; and that
" I do not now, in these last moments of
" my life, ask to see you is only because
" I would not tax your pity with the sight
" of so sad an object ;—I am blasted, my
" dear friend, wither'd in my bloom, and
" scarce the shadow of what I was ; the
" enclosed memoirs will inform you of
" the cruel cause, which I entreat you
" will publish to the world after my de-
" cease ;—the shocking tale may perhaps
" be a serviceable warning to some pa-
" rents as well as children : — I have
" given my cousin ***** orders con-
" cerning some things I would have
" done, among the number of which is,
" that he will present you with my hoop
" diamond ring ;—I beg you will accept
" and wear it in remembrance of

Your dying friend,

ALINDA.

He started, — bent his brows, turn'd pale and red by turns, and seem'd in great confusion while looking over this little epistle ; but all his emotions were very much increased on examining the papers that accompany'd it ; — still as he read he tore the leaves asunder and threw them on the fire, which happening not to burn very fiercely, I was quick enough.

enough to snatch from the intended devastation and convey into my pocket, while he was taken up with the remaining pages, thought himself secure by the tale of his misdeeds being extinct in all devouring flames.

He had but just finished, when a servant came running into the room, and told him that mr. ***** was below, and having been informed that Alinda's keys had been deliver'd to him, demanded to speak with him immediately ;—on this the artful hypocrite composed his countenance, drew every feature into the attitude of solemn sadness, and holding a white handkerchief to his eyes, went down to act the part he thought would best become him before the kinsman of Alinda.

I follow'd close at his heels into the parlour, where mr. ***** and two other persons waited for him ;—he began, with well dissembled grief, to expatiate on the loss the world had in so excellent a lady as Alinda : and fail'd not, in his harangue, artfully to intermix some praises on himself, for the good principles his precepts had ingrafted on her mind.

Mr.

Mr. ***** seem'd to take very little notice of all he said on this occasion and prevented him from going so far as perhaps he otherwise would have done, by telling him, in a very grave and reserv'd tone, that he was in great haste at present ; — that he came thither only to give the necessary orders concerning his cousin's funeral ; and that till the melancholy ceremony was over, he should put a friend in possession of the house, and whatever effects it contain'd ; therefore expected the keys of every thing should be immediately deliver'd.

To this the parson reply'd, — that he had got them into his hands with no other view than to secure them for him, who had the undoubted right to all which his dear benefactress had been mistress of ;—
‘ For indeed, continued he, I apprehended some foul play might have been attempted, as at the hour of her decease she had none but servants about her, some of whom had been too lately taken into the family to have given any great proofs of their integrity.’

After this they went through every room, examining what was to be found ; all which scrutiny, as yet, afforded the heir

heir no reason for complaint :—on opening the abovemention'd buroe, and looking over Alinda's jewels, he miss'd not the ring he had been defrauded of; but when the other private drawers presented him so little of what he expected, he could not forbear discovering some suspicion, as it must be own'd he had sufficient cause; for the person who had been beforehand with him in the search, had left no more than eight guineas and one six-and-thirty piece in specie, with three or four bills of an inconsiderable value.

‘ I am surprised, said mr. ***** , that a woman of my confin’s fortune should leave herself so bare of cash ; and can not imagine by what means she dissipat’d so large a yearly income.’ — ‘ Alas, sir,’ reply’d the pretended zealot, with his hands and eyes lifted up to heaven,— ‘ it ought not to appear strange to you, that a lady of your excellent kinf- woman’s charitable and benevolent dis- position should refuse nothing in her power, when the cries of distress and the moans of affliction call’d for her assis- tance. — If you would know in what manner she disposed of her money, en- quire of hospitals, the prisons, and the necessitous petitioners that every day

' day received their sustenance from her
' bounty, and you will find an easy ac-
' count of her expences in her large and
' numerous donations.'

Mr. ***** only answer'd fullenly, that he should be better able to judge how he ought to think of the affair after he had spoke to her steward; on which the other clapping his hand upon his breast, was beginning to make many asseverations, that till that moment he never knew what sum or sums the lady had by her when she died, or had ever look'd, nor even entertain'd a thought of looking into any place where it might be supposed she kept her money. — I staid not, however, to hear what effect his hypocrisy produced, but went home, being impatient to see the contents of Alinda's manuscript.



C H A P. VII.

Will fully satisfy all the curiosity the former may have excited.

THE haste I made in snatching the following papers from the flames, happily preserv'd them so entirely from the destruction to which they had been destin'd, that tho' the edges were in many places much scorch'd, yet not a single word throughout the whole was any way damaged ; and the reader may depend on having the story as perfect as if he saw it in the heroine's own hand.

*Memoirs of the unfortunate ALINDA,
wrote by herself, and faithfully transcrib'd from the original copy.*

“ I Am sensible that many people have
“ been very busy with my fame while
“ living, nor do I expect to be treated
“ with less severity after I am dead ;—I
“ cannot, however, think of an eternal
“ separation from this world, without
“ leaving something behind me which
“ may serve to clear up those passages
“ in my conduct, which by their being
“ myste-

“ mysterious have given room for cen-
“ sure ; and I do not this with any
“ view of softening the asperity of the
“ ill-natured for the errors I have been
“ guilty of, or of exciting compassion in
“ the more generous and gentle for my
“ misfortunes ; but merely to the end
“ that if I am condemn’d, I may be con-
“ demn’d for real, not imaginary facts.

“ Sorry am I to accuse a father who
“ so tenderly loved me ; yet certain it
“ is, that his over anxiety for my welfare
“ has been the primary source of every
“ woe my heart has labour’d under ; and
“ that by his mistaken endeavours to
“ make me great and happy, I have been
“ render’d the most miserable of created
“ beings.

“ The fortune I was born to be
“ possess’d of, and some natural endow-
“ ments his affection fancy’d in me,
“ made him flatter himself with the
“ hopes of seeing me one day blaze
“ forth in all the pomp of quality ; nor
“ could he endure the thoughts of marry-
“ ing me to any man beneath the rank
“ of right honourable ; and for fear any
“ partial inclination of my own should
“ disappoint these high raised expecta-
“ tions, he kept me from the conver-
“ sation

“ sation of every one whom he thought
“ capable of attracting a heart unbyass'd
“ by interest, and unambitious of gran-
“ deur.

“ Soon after my mother's death he
“ quitted business, and retir'd to an estate
“ he had some time before purchased in
“ the country : — when we removed, I
“ was too young to have any taste for
“ the pleasures of the town, and regret-
“ ted only the want of those play-fellows
“ I had left behind ; — indeed I wonder
“ that I was not quite moped ; I was
“ suffer'd to go to no school, tho' there
“ was a great one very near us ; — never
“ stirr'd beyond the precincts of our
“ garden walls ; — went not to church,
“ because there it would have been im-
“ possible for me not to see and be seen ;
“ — no company visited us ; for my
“ father deprived himself of the pleasure
“ of conversing with any of the neigh-
“ bouring gentry, for fear that, as I
“ grew up, I might take a liking to
“ some one or other of their sons, none
“ of whom he thought a match good
“ enough for me, as they were not dig-
“ nified with titles : — I had learn'd
“ writing and dancing, but was far from
“ being perfect in either ; and my fa-
“ ther, being unwilling I should be with-

" Out these accomplishments, took the
" pains himself to set me copies to im-
" prove me in the one, and at length
" provided a master, too old and too
" ugly to give him any apprehensions,
" to instruct me in the other ;—besides
" these two avocations, I had no amuse-
" ment except reading, which, as I
" much delighted in, my father con-
" stantly supply'd me with such books
" as he thought proper for my sex and
" age.

" Excepting some treatises of divi-
" nity, the subjects of my entertainment
" afforded little improvement to my
" understanding, they consisting only
" of romances, and some few very old
" plays ; so that the ideas they inspired
" me with were as antiquated as the
" habits worn in the days of queen Eli-
" zabeth, and I was utterly ignorant
" of the modes, manners and customs
" of the age I lived in.

" In this stupid and dispiriting situa-
" tion did I pass full nineteen months ;
" about the expiration of which time my
" father happen'd into company with a
" person who wears the sacred appea-
" rance of an Ecclesiastic ; but is in
" reality one of those mention'd in holy
" writ

“ writ by the name of wolves in sheeps
“ cloathing; — his outward behaviour
“ seems directed by the ministers of
“ grace and goodness, while in his trea-
“ cherous heart a thousand fiends lie in
“ wait to bring ruin and destruction on
“ the credulous listner to his wiles;—but
“ before I proced in my unhappy story,
“ it is fit I should give a more parti-
“ cular character of the wretch who has
“ so great a share in it.

“ First for his extraction:—his father
“ was a frenchman, servant to a person
“ of distinction in Normandy; but having
“ more ambition than honesty, found
“ means to rob his master of a consider-
“ able sum and came over to England,
“ where he set up for a gentleman and a
“ most zealous protestant, told a long
“ plausible story of the great hardships
“ he had sustain'd on the score of re-
“ ligion, and found here the same pity
“ and encouragement as many others
“ had done who fly here for an asylum
“ on the same pretences.

“ Soon after his arrival he married
“ a Dutchwoman, by whom he had a
“ son who inherits all his father's virtues,
“ and is the person whose story is so
“ unhappily interwoven with my own.

" Young Le Bris, for that is the
" name of this worthy family, disco-
" ver'd in his youth some indications of
" a good capacity for learning, inso-
" much that a certain lord taking a
" great fancy to him, sent him to West-
" mister school, and afterwards to the
" University, in order to qualify him
" for the pulpit, assuring him that he
" should not be without a handsome be-
" nefice as soon as he should be fit to
" receive it.

" But he had scarce completed his
" studies for that purpose, when all his
" present support and future expectations
" vanish'd on the sudden death of his
" noble patron, which was follow'd in
" a few months after by that of his fa-
" ther, so that he was left entirely des-
" titute, his mother not being able to
" afford him the least assistance.

" After many long and fruitless sol-
" licitations for a living, he was glad to
" accept of a small curacy in one of the
" remotest counties in England, where
" he resided several years; but was at
" last turned out on account of neglect
" of duty, and other misbehaviour; —
" he then came back to London, —
" gave

" gave out printed bills for teaching
" French and Latin at very low rates;
" but finding little encouragement that
" way turn'd Fleet-parson, earn'd a pre-
" carious sustenance by clandestine mar-
" riages.

" It was in these wretched circum-
" stances that my father met with him,
" being in town on some business, and
" being told by some one, who it is likely
" knew no more of him than what he was
" pleased to say of himself, that he was
" a very worthy, tho' distress'd clergy-
" man, made him the offer of a hand-
" some fallary to come into his family,
" by way of chaplain; and, withal, to
" instruct me in the French language;
" and whatever else was fit for me to
" learn, or he was capable of teaching;
" — he readily embraced the proposal,
" and on my father's return came down
" with him.

" My father presented him to me as a
" kind of Tutor, or Preceptor; — told me
" I must submit myself to his directions,
" — be attentive to all he said to me,
" and in every thing treat him with the
" greatest respect and reverence; " —
" For, added he, it is by the lessons he

‘ is capable of giving you, that you
‘ alone can make any shining figure in
‘ the station wherein I hope to see you
‘ placed.

“ It will, perhaps, afford some matter
“ of surprise that my father, who had
“ hitherto preserved such an extreme
“ caution in preventing my having the
“ least conversation with any man, should
“ now so strenuously recommend this
“ parson to me; but it must be con-
“ sider'd, that he was no less than six or
“ seven and forty years of age; — that
“ tho' not deform'd was far from hand-
“ some; and, besides, had a certain au-
“ sterity in his manners which could not
“ be thought would be very agreeable
“ to youth.

“ It was, indeed, some time before I
“ could be contented with the dominion
“ given him over me; but my obedience
“ to my father obliging me to behave
“ towards him with esteem, custom at
“ last converted that complaisance, which
“ at first was no more than feign'd, into
“ sincere: — a kind of affection, by de-
“ grees, mingled itself with the reverence
“ I was bid to pay him; — I was never
“ so happy as in the hours set apart for
“ receiving his instructions; and the
“ thoughts

" thoughts of the benefits that might be
" supposed to accrue from them afforded
" me less pleasure than the praises I was
" always certain he would bestow on my
" docility. — In fine, I not only lov'd
" the Teacher for the Precept's sake ;
" but, as the poet says,

I lov'd the Precepts for the Teacher's
sake.

" Nor is it to be wonder'd at that I
" tasted more satisfaction in his society
" than I had ever known before ; — I
" wanted not ideas, tho' hitherto I had
" nothing to improve them : — I had
" been allow'd to converse with none but
" the servants, who could only divert
" me with idle tales of thieves, appari-
" tions, and haunted houses ; — my
" tutor, after having finish'd his graver
" lessons, would frequently entertain me
" with some extraordinary incident or
" other, either taken from history or ro-
" mance ; but, whether real or fictitious,
" I had sense enough to know were such
" as enlarg'd my understanding as well
" as charm'd my ears.

" It is certain, indeed, that he spar'd
" no pains to insinuate himself into my
" good graces ; and no less certain also,

" that the ungrateful design he had in
" doing so succeeded to the utter destruc-
" tion of the whole happiness of my fu-
" ture life ; and, at last, of my life itself,
" as will appear by these memoirs, which,
" while I am writing, I know not whe-
" ther I shall have strength to finish.

" I shall therefore reduce my unhappy
" story into as short a compass as I can :
" — in spite of the little amiableness this
" Tutor had in his person ; — in spite of
" the vast disparity of years between us,
" I conceived the most tender affection
" for him ; — alas I was then too young,
" — too innocent, to know what was
" meant by the word love, any farther
" than that love which we naturally bear
" to a father, brother, or some other near
" relation, — and thought not that what
" I felt for him was any more, or would
" be attended with any other conse-
" quences ; and, as I apprehended no
" shame or danger in the kindness I had
" for him, endeavour'd not to put a stop
" to the growth of it, nor even to con-
" ceal it.

" But Le Bris saw much better into
" my heart than I did myself, and dread-
" ing lest my father should be alarm'd at
" the too open fondness of my behaviour
" " to

" to him, began to treat me with less
" familiarity, and exerted the master
" much more than he had done ; — this
" change both surprised and griev'd me ;
" — I bore it, however, for two whole
" days, without seeming to take any no-
" tice of it ; but on the third, being
" alone with him in his closet, where
" I constantly went every morning to re-
" ceive my lessons," — ' What is the
matter with you, my dear Tutor, said
I, I hope I have done nothing to offend
you ? — I am sure I would not willingly
be guilty of deserving that you
should frown upon me.' — ' No, my
precious charge, reply'd he after a
pause, it is not in your nature to give
offence ; but I would not incur your
father's displeasure either towards you
or me ; — men are apt to be jealous of
the affections of their children, and I
am sometimes afraid that he should
think you love me almost as well as
you do him.' — ' Indeed I do so, —
quite as well, cry'd I eagerly. But
why should he be angry at that, when
he bid me use you with the same love
and respect as I did himself ?'

' People on some occasions, answer'd
he, will be displeased at a too exact
performance of their own commands ;

' and if my worthy Patron, your father,
' should happen to be of this opinion,
' the consequence would infallibly be an
' eternal separation between us ; — he
' would drive me from his house, and I
' should never see my pretty charge
' again.'

' If you think so, return'd I, though
' I hate all kind of dissimulation, I will
' make him believe I am weary of learn-
' ing of you, and that I cannot abide
' you.' — ' Dear pretty angel, cry'd
' he, tenderly taking me in his arms ;
' there is no need of going to such ex-
' tremes ; — I would only have you be-
' have with more distance towards me
' than you have done of late ; and it will
' not be amiss if you sometimes complain
' that I set you too hard lessons ; because
' if you should seem to learn too fast, he
' may begin to think there will soon be
' no occasion for a Tutor.' — ' Well,
' said I, I will do every thing you bid
' me ; for indeed it would almost break
' my heart to part with you.' — " Here
" he kiss'd off the tears that fell from my
" eyes in speaking these last words, and
" I return'd all his endearments with the
" same affection as the fondest child
" would do those of the most indulgent
" parent.

" It

“ It will, perhaps, seem a little strange
“ that a girl turn’d of thirteen, as I then
“ was, should think or act in the manner
“ I did ; but the way in which I had
“ been brought up left me in the same
“ ignorance and innocence as others of
“ six or seven years old.

“ I obey’d his instructions with so
“ much exactness, that my father was far
“ from suspecting either my folly or the
“ baseness of the person he had set over
“ me : — the rest of the family were no
“ more quick-sighted, nor it could not
“ be expected they should be so ; — our
“ house-keeper, tho’ a very good, was
“ a silly old woman, and knew nothing
“ beyond the œconomy of those affairs
“ committed to her charge ; — the maid
“ who waited on me was her daughter,
“ and had been bred to think every man
“ who wore the habit of a Parson was too
“ be worship’d ; and the other servants
“ were too seldom with us to have any
“ opportunity of making discoveries.

“ I arriv’d at my fourteenth year, —
“ my father kept my birth-day so far as
“ to order something better than ordi-
“ nary for dinner, and drank my health
“ several times at table ; — among other

“ discourse concerning me, he said to Le Bris,” — ‘ Well, Doctor, your pupil will now begin to think herself a woman, and I must find a husband for her who will be able to reward the care you have taken of her with a good fat Benefice.’ “ To which the fawning hypocrite reply’d, — That the pleasure of seeing his worthy patron’s daughter happy, would be to him the best benefice he could obtain.

“ Nothing farther pass’d at this time on the same subject; but the next morning, when I was alone with my Tutor in his closet, ” ‘ Do you remember, my dear miss, cry’d he, with a very melancholy air, what your father said yesterday? — you will be marry’d soon, and I shall lose you for ever.’ — ‘ Do not talk so, reply’d I hastily, I do not want to be married; but if my father should compel me to it, all the husbands in the world should not make me forget my dear Tutor; — no, you shall always live with me; — I would not part from you to be a dutchess or a lady mayorefs.’ — ‘ Nor would I part from you, said he, taking me in his arms, for an archbishopric; — and to be plain, continued he, I have received letters since I have been here, with the offers of several

• several great livings ; but I have re-
• fused them all rather than quit my dear
• pupil.' — ' Have you indeed, return'd
• I, hanging fondly on him ? — oh how
• kind you have been ! — I should be the
• most ungrateful creature upon earth if
• I did not love you dearly for it.' — ' But
• will you always keep me with you,
• cry'd he ? ' — ' As long as I live,
• answer'd I.' — ' Will you swear it,
• rejoin'd he ? ' — ' Yes, answer'd I, a
• thousand and a thousand times over, if
• you desire it.'

" The wretch did not fail to take me
" at my word : — I bound myself, by
" the most solemn imprecations that
" words could form, that when I be-
" came mistress of my actions he should
" always live with me. — After this, the
" hours we pass'd together were em-
" ploy'd more in improving the foolish
" affection I had for him, than in any
" lessons for improving my understand-
" ing. — My father imputed the slow
" progress I made in my studies not to
" any want of ability in my teacher, but
" to my own neglect, and often chid me
" for it, which I bore patiently, as I be-
" lieved it the surest means of keeping
" my dear Tutor with me : — this he
" took so kindly, that he told me one
" day,

“ day, he flatter’d himself I lov’d him
“ almost as well as I did my father.” —
‘ I hope it is no sin, cry’d I childishly,
‘ if I love you quite as well?’ — ‘ Far
‘ from it, answer’d he, you are only his
‘ daughter by nature, but you are mine
‘ by affection; — you are the child of
‘ my soul, and therefore ought to love
‘ me better.’ — ‘ I am glad of that, re-
‘ join’d I, for indeed I do love you a
‘ great deal better, — I am sure I do;
‘ for I don’t feel half the pleasure when
‘ he kisses me as when you do; — and
‘ when you take me in your arms my
‘ heart beats as if it would come out.’ —
‘ It will scarce be doubted but that he
“ now bestow’d upon me those endear-
“ ments I had declar’d myself so well
“ satisfied with; and some minutes after,
“ as I had turn’d to a looking-glass to
“ adjust some disorder in my head-dress,
“ he pull’d me to him, and making
“ me sit upon his knee,’ — ‘ You are
‘ very pretty, my dear miss, said he, and
‘ have no defect in your shape, but being
‘ a little too flat before;’ — “ with these
“ words he thrust one of his hands with-
“ in my stays, telling me that handling
“ my breasts would make them grow,
“ and I should then be a perfect beauty.

“ Not

" Not conscious of any guilt I was ignorant of shame ; and thinking every thing he did was right, made not the least resistance ; but suffer'd him, by degrees, to proceed to liberties, which, had I known the meaning of, I should have stabb'd him for attempting ; but, as I have somewhere read,

By no example warn'd how to beware,
My very innocence became my snare.

" It will, perhaps, be supposed that the perfidious man did not stop here, but proceeded yet farther, to the utter completion of my dishonour ; but I shall do him the justice to say he never offer'd any such thing ; though I have good reafons to believe he was prevented only by his fears of the consequences that might have attended it, to the ruin of a design which promised him more satisfaction than the enjoyment of my person.

" In the ridiculous way I have been describing did we continue 'till I was in my seventeenth year, about which time my father being obliged to go to London on a law affair, he left the sole management of the family, as well as

" as of myself, to his favourite chaplain,
" 'till he should return, which he expect-
" ed to do in two months.

" He had not been gone full three
" weeks before a stranger came to our
" house on a visit to my Tutor;—he re-
" ceived him with great marks of civi-
" lity, and told me afterwards that he
" was the land-steward of a nobleman
" who had sent him on purpose to court
" his acceptance of a benefice worth near
" eight hundred pounds per annum: —
" as I suspected not the truth of this I
" was terribly frighten'd, and cry'd out,
‘ — Then you will leave me at last ! ’ —
‘ It would be with an extreme-reluctance
‘ I should do so, reply'd he; but what
‘ can I do ? — If I should hereafter be
‘ expos'd to any misfortunes, how would
‘ the world blame me for having refused
‘ such an offer ? ’ — ‘ What misfortunes,
‘ said I, have you to fear ? — I shall al-
‘ ways have enough to support my dear
‘ Tutor.’

‘ My dear child, resum'd he, you for-
‘ get that when once you are married
‘ there will be nothing in your power, —
‘ all will be your husband's, who may
‘ take it into his head to turn me out of
‘ door directly.’ — ‘ No such matter, re-
‘ ply'd

‘ ply’d I hastily, for I will make him promise and swear beforehand to keep you always in the family.’ — ‘ Few men, said he, pay any regard, after they become husbands, to the promises and vows they made when they were lovers. — In fine, my little angel, continued he, taking me tenderly in his arms, there is but one way to secure our lasting happiness, to which if you agree I will immediately refuse the great offer now made me, with all my future hopes of rising in the church, and devote myself eternally to you.’

“ These last words I thought so highly obliging to me, that I hung about his neck, kiss’d his cheek, and cry’d, “ I would do every thing he would have me; — he then told me that a writing should be drawn up between us, by which we should mutually bind ourselves, under the penalty of the half of what either should be possess’d of, never to separate.

“ On my ready compliance with this proposal, he ventured to make a second, even more impudent than the first; — after seeming to consider a little within himself.” — ‘ I have been thinking, said he, that if the person

‘ you

‘ you shall marry should happen to be of
‘ a cross, perverse nature, tho’ for his
‘ own sake he not will drive me from his
‘ house, yet he may use me so ill as to
‘ compel me to go out of it of my own
‘ accord, — suppose, therefore, you
‘ should bind yourself by the writing I
‘ have mention’d, and under the same
‘ penalty, never to marry any man with-
‘ out my consent.’

‘ Bless me, cry’d I, a little surprised,
‘ how can I do this! — you know I must
‘ obey my father.’ — ‘ Heaven forbid you
‘ should do otherwise, rejoin’d the art-
‘ ful hypocrite, — you may be sure I
‘ shall never oppose either his will, or
‘ your own inclination, in the choice of
‘ a husband; — what I speak of is only a
‘ thing of form, which, when shewn to
‘ your husband, will oblige him to treat
‘ me with gratitude and respect.

“ I was entirely satisfy’d with this,
“ and reply’d, I would do what he desir’d
“ as soon as he pleased; — on which, ”—
“ It happens luckily, said he, that the
“ gentleman who came here on the busi-
“ ness I told you of was bred to the law,
“ — I will let him know as much as is
“ necessary of our affair, and get him
“ to draw up a proper instrument.” —

“ In

“ In speaking these words he left me and
“ went in search of his friend, who at
“ that time was walking in the garden;
“ waiting, no doubt, his coming.

“ I had little time allow'd me to
“ reflect on what I was about to do, —
“ Le Bris immediately return'd, bring-
“ ing the lawyer with him, — the latter
“ of whom desir'd to receive instructions
“ from my own mouth for what he was
“ to write, and accordingly I repeated
“ the sense of the obligation I was to
“ lay myself under, leaving it to him to
“ put it in such words as he should find
“ proper ; — if I had been mistress of the
“ least share of common reason, I must
“ have seen that all this scheine was a
“ thing previously concerted between
“ these two villains ; for the Lawyer im-
“ mediately pull'd out of his pocket a
“ large parchment, with seals fix'd to it,
“ and every thing requisite to make the
“ instrument firm and valid ; — but I
“ was infatuated, — all my little under-
“ standing was subjected to the will of
“ this wicked Tutor ; — I gave an implicit
“ faith to all he said, and paid an im-
“ plicit obedience to all his dictates.

“ The lawyer took his leave next day,
“ and nothing material happen'd till
“ within

" within a week of the time my father
" was expected home, when, instead of
" himself came the melancholy account
" that he had been seiz'd with an apo-
" plectic fit, and tho' he recover'd from
" it, expired within two hours after; —
" he had made his will about a year be-
" fore, by which he left me sole heir of
" every thing he was in possession of,
" except a few legacies, and in case his
" demise should happen before I was
" married, or of age, appointed two
" gentlemen for his executors and my
" guardians;—they both wrote to me,
" as did also my cousin ******, ac-
" quainting me that it was necessary I
" should come to London directly on
" this occasion, and each inviting me to
" their respective houses, which as they
" lived in different parts of the town,
" I was at liberty to chuse which I
" liked best.

" My Tutor, however, dissuaded me
" from accepting any of their offers, and
" told me he would write to a friend
" in London to provide a ready-furnish'd
" house for my reception, till things
" were settled, and I should resolve whe-
" ther I would reside in town or coun-
" try; — accordingly he did so, and
" when we came within ten miles of
" London

" London we were met on the road by
" the lawyer, who, as I have since dis-
" cover'd, was his chief agent in every
" thing; — he conducted us to a house
" in Jermin-street, which was indeed
" very neat and commodious.

" It was late when we arriv'd, but I
" did not fail to send the next morning
" to my two Guardians and cousin ****,
" who all came to see me the same day,
" and express'd themselves in very affec-
" tionate terms; — I presented my Tutor
" to them, as a person for whom my
" father had a high esteem, on which
" they treated him with that respect they
" supposed him to deserve.

" I now enter'd into a scene of life
" altogether new to me; — several di-
" stant relations, whom I knew only by
" their names; and many other gentle-
" men and ladies, who had been acquain-
" ted with my mother, came to pay
" their respects to me; — all my morn-
" ings were taken up with messages and
" compliments, and all my afternoons
" with receiving and returning visits.—
" How strange was the transition? —
" from being confined to the narrow pre-
" ciscts of a lone country mansion, I
" had now the whole metropolis to range
" in;

" in ;—instead of the grave lessons of
" two old men, my ears were now con-
" tinually fill'd with the flattering praises
" of addressing beaus ; — instead of ha-
" ving nothing to amuse my hours,
" new diversions, — new entertainments,
" crowded upon each moment, and I
" was incessantly hurried from one plea-
" sure to another, till my head grew
" giddy with the whirl of promiscuous
" delights.

" As I was young, not ugly, and
" look'd upon as a rich heireſs, propo-
" ſals of marriage were every day made
" to me, all which I communicated to
" my Tutor ; but tho' many of them
" were much to my advantage, he always
" found some pretence or other for re-
" fusing his consent, and I accordingly
" rejected them, to the surprise of all who
" knew me, and the great dissatisfac-
" tion of my best friends.

" He was not, however, half pleased
" with the gay manner in which I lived,
" and as soon as the affairs relating to
" my estate were settled, would fain
" have prevail'd upon me to return into
" the country ; but I had too high a re-
" lish for the diversions of the town to
" pay that regard to his advice I had
" formerly

" formerly done; and, instead of complying with it, quitted the house I was in, hired another upon lease, and furnish'd it in the most elegant manner I could:—he grew very grave on my behaviour; but as I kept firm to both the engagements I had made with him, he had no pretence to complain of my actions in other matters.

" For a time, indeed, my head was not the least turn'd towards marriage; — I thought no farther of the men than to be vain and delighted with their flatteries;—happy would it have been for me had I continued always in this mind; but my ill fate too soon, alas, presented me with an object which convinced me, that all the joys of public admiration are nothing, when compared to one soft hour with the youth we love, and by whom we think we are beloved.

" I believe there is little need for me to say that this object, so enchanting to my senses, was the young, the handsome, the accomplish'd Amasis:—the world, whom he made no secret of the passion he profess'd for me, was also witness in what manner I received it;—we appear'd together in all public

“ lic places ; — I treated him in all com-
“ panies with a difference which shew'd
“ the esteem I had for him : — my friends
“ approved my choice, and the union
“ between us was look'd upon as a thing
“ so absolutely determined, that many
“ believed the ceremony was already
“ over, when, to their great surprise,
“ they saw at once that we were utterly
“ broke off, and in a very short time
“ after, the ungrateful Amasis became
“ the husband of another.

“ My tutor, on perceiving me incli-
“ ned to favour Amasis more than I had
“ ever done any of those who had hi-
“ therto address'd me, began to rail at
“ him, and tell me a thousand ridicu-
“ lous stories he pretended to have heard
“ in relation to his conduct ; — I still re-
“ tained too much reverence for this
“ wicked man to contradict what he
“ said, but not enough to enable me to
“ conquer my new passion ; — I loved
“ Amasis, and continued to give him
“ daily proofs of it ; — this so incensed
“ him, that he told me one day, — that
“ he wonder'd I would encourage the
“ courtship of a man whom I must never
“ expect to marry.” — ‘ Why not, sir,
“ answer'd I, neither his birth nor for-
“ tune are inferior to mine.’ — ‘ Sup-
“ pose

pose them so, rejoin'd he, the most material thing is wanting, which is my consent.' — ' When I gave you that power over me, said I, you promised never to thwart my inclination.' I did so, reply'd he; but, to be plain with you, I then expected all your inclination would be in favour of myself.' — Yourself! cry'd I, more surprised than words can describe.' — ' Yes, Alinda, resumed he, methinks the thing should not appear so odd to you; — call back to your remembrance the familiarities that have pass'd between us, and then justify, if you can, to virtue or to modesty, the least desire of giving yourself to any other man.'

" Rage, — astonishment, and shame, for the folly I had been guilty of, so overwhelm'd my heart at this reproach, that I had not power to speak one word, but stood looking on him with a countenance which, I believe, sufficiently express'd all those passions, while he went on in these terms : "

How often, continued he, have you hung about my neck whole hours together, and by the warmest fondness tempted me to take every freedom with you but the last, which if I had

“ not been possess’d of more honour
“ than you now shew of constancy, I also
“ should have seiz’d, and left you no-
“ thing to bestow upon a rival ?

“ The storm which had been gathering
“ in my breast all the time he was
“ speaking, now burst out with the ex-
“ tremest violence ; — I raved, and load-
“ ed him with epithets not very becom-
“ ing in me to make use of, yet not
“ worse than he deserved ; — he heard
“ me with a sullen silence ; but when
“ I mention’d the cruelty and baseness
“ of upbraiding me with the follies of my
“ childish innocence, he told me, with
“ a sneer, that he would advise me
“ not to put that among my catalogue
“ of complaints.’ — ‘ For, said he, the
“ world will scarce believe, that a lady
“ of fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen, had
“ the same inclinations in toying with a
“ gentleman as a baby has with its nurse.

“ I would have reply’d, that the man-
“ ner in which I was educated kept me
“ in the same ignorance as a baby ; but
“ something within rose in my throat,
“ stopping the passage of my brath,
“ and I sunk fainting in the chair where
“ I was sitting : — whether he was really
“ moved with this sight, or only affected
“ to

" to be so, I know not ; but he ran to
" me, used proper means to bring me to
" myself, and on my recovery I found my-
" self prest very tenderly within his arms :
" — his touch was now grown odious
" to me, — I struggled to get loose ;" —
" Be not thus unkind, cry'd he, holding
" me still faster, you once took pleasure in
" my embraces, you have confess'd you
" did ; — oh then recall those soft ideas,
" and we shall both be happy.'

' No, answered I, breaking forcibly
from him, what then was the effect of
too much innocence, would be now a
guilt for which I should detest myself
as much as I do you.' — ' I still love
you, said he.' — ' Prove it then, cry'd
I fiercely, by giving me up that writ-
ing which your artifices ensnared me to
sign, and cease to oppose my marriage
with Amasis.' — ' No, madam, re-
ply'd he, if you persist in the resolution
of marrying Amasis, half your estate
would be a small consolation to me for
the loss of you ; and you cannot sure
imagine me weak enough to resign my
claim to the one, after being deprived
of the other.'

" I had not patience to continue this
discourse, but retired to my chamber,

" where, throwing myself upon the bed, I
" vented some part of the anguish of my
" mind in a flood of tears ; after which,
" finding some little ease, I began to
" reflect, that tormenting myself in this
" manner would avail nothing, and that
" I ought rather to try if any possible
" means could be found for extricating
" me from the labyrinth I was entangled
" in.

" Accordingly I arose, — muffled my-
" self up as well as I could to prevent
" being known,—took a hackney-coach,
" and went to the chambers of an emi-
" nent lawyer ;—I related to him all the
" circumstances of my unhappy case, con-
" cealing only the names of the persons
" concern'd in it ;—he listen'd attentively
" to what I said, and when I had done,
" ask'd me of what age I was when I
" enter'd into that engagement I now
" wanted to be freed from ; which ques-
" tion I answering with sincerity, he
" shook his head, and told me that he
" was sorry to assure me I could have
" no relief from law, and that the best,
" and indeed the only method I could
" take, was to endeavour to compromise
" the affair with the gentleman.

" I re-

" I return'd home very disconsolate,
" and was above a week without being
" able to resolve on any thing; but my
" impatience to be united to the man I
" loved, and at the same time eased of the
" presence of the man I hated, at last
" determined me to follow the lawyer's
" advice; — I sent for my wicked tutor
" into my chamber, — talked to him
" in more obliging terms than I had done
" since the first discovery of his designs
" upon me; but represented to him the
" absurdity of thinking of marrying me
" himself; — and concluded with telling
" him, that if he would cancel the en-
" gagement between us I would make
" him a gratuity of a thousand pounds,
" and also be ready to do him any other
" service in my power.

" He rejected this proposal with the
" greatest contempt." — ' You are cer-
• tainly mad, Alinda, said he, or take
• me to be so; — a thousand pounds
• would be a fine equivalent, indeed, for
• the half of your estate, jewels, rich fur-
• niture, plate, and whatever else you
• are in possession of; to all which your
• marriage will give me an undoubted
• claim, and I accordingly shall seize.' —
• Suppose I never marry, cry'd I. —

' Be it so, answer'd he, I must still con-
' tinue to live with you ; and what you
' offer for my quitting you does not
' amount to five years purchase of my
' fallary and board as your chaplain.

" These words making me imagine
" his chief objection was to the smallness
" of the sum I told him I would double,
" nay even treble it, for the purchase
" of my liberty ; but he told me it
" would be in vain for me to tempt
" him with any offers of that kind ;—
" that no consideration whatever should
" prevail with him to depart from the
" agreement between us, and he would
" always hold me to my bargain.

" The determined air with which he
" spoke this, made me think it best not
" to urge him any farther at that time ;
" — the next day, however, and several
" succeeding ones, I fail'd not to renew
" the discourse ; but tho' I made use of
" every argument my reason could sup-
" ply me with, — tho' I wept, pray'd,
" rav'd, — by turns cajol'd and threaten'd,
" all I could say, — all I could do was
" ineffectual, and the more I labour'd to
" bring him to compliance, the more
" stubborn his obstinacy grew.

" To

“ To make any one sensible what it
“ was I suffer’d in this cruel dilemma,
“ they must also be made sensible to
“ what an infinite degree I loved the man
“ whom it was now impossible for me
“ to be happy with, and both these are
“ inexpressible ; — I shall therefore only
“ say, that I was very near being totally
“ deprived of that little share of reason
“ heaven had bestow’d upon me.

“ Amasis, to whom I had confess’d
“ the tenderness I had for him, was all
“ this while continually soliciting me to
“ complete our union ; — one day,
“ when he was more than ordinarily
“ pressing on this occasion, and my heart
“ being very full, I cry’d out, almost
“ without knowing what I said,” —
‘ Oh, Amasis, you know not what you
‘ ask, when you ask me to marry you !’
“ — This exclamation surpris’d him ; but
“ having begun, I now went on.” —
‘ You expect, said I, an estate of twelve
‘ hundred pounds a year ; but I will
‘ not deceive you, you find me worth
‘ only the half of what you have been
‘ made to hope.’ — ‘ When I made my
‘ addresses to the lovely Alinda, answer’d
‘ he, I had no eye to the fortune she
‘ might bring me ; — but wherefore this

• fruitless trial of my love? — your
• guardians have shewn me the writings
• of your estate, and I know to a single
• hundred what you are possess'd of.' —
• Suppose, rejoin'd I, that I should have
• previously disposed of the one half of
• what otherwise our marriage would
• have given you?" — 'I will suppose no
• such thing, reply'd he, it cannot be.' —
• It both can and is, said I, bursting
• into tears, I have unwarily enter'd into
• an engagement, by which I forfeit the
• moiety of all I am mistress of, even to
• my very jewels, if ever I marry any man,
• except on certain conditions, which
• condition I am now well assur'd I never
• can obtain.

• Death and hell, cry'd he, starting
• up in a fury! — What condition, —
• when, — where, — to whom, on what
• account was this engagement made!" —
• Shame would not let me answer to
• these interrogatories, and I remain'd
• in a kind of stupid silence." — If by
• any artifices, pursued he, you have been
• seduced to sign a compact of this wild
• nature, unfold the whole of the affair,
• and depend that either the laws or this
• avenging arm shall do you justice." —
• I now repented that I had so rashly
• divulged any part of this fatal secret,
 " — not

“ — not but I should have been glad to
“ have seen my wicked tutor punish'd ;
“ but I knew that on the least attempt
“ made for my redress, he would infal-
“ libly expose the follies I had been
“ guilty of in regard to him ; and when
“ compared to that the loss of Amasis,
“ — my fortune, or even my life itself,
“ seem'd a less terrible misfortune ; — for
“ this reason, therefore, I refused the en-
“ treaties of a beloved lover, and screen'd
“ the villainy of a wretch who most my
“ soul abhor'd.

“ In fine, I would reveal no more
“ than I had done, — Amasis left me in
“ a very ill humour, and the next morn-
“ ing I received a billet from him con-
“ taining these stabbing lines :

To miss ALINDA *****.

“ MADAM,

“ **I** Have been considering on the amaz-
“ ing account you gave me last
“ night ; and as you refuse to discover
“ either the person with whom you made
“ this engagement, or the motives which
“ induced you to it; can look on it as
“ no other than a contract with some
“ gentleman, once happy in your affec-
“ tions ; — a second-hand passion neither

" suits with the delicacy of my humour,
 " nor to encroach upon the rights of
 " another with my honour: — I shall
 " therefore desist troubling you with any
 " future visits, but shall be always glad
 " to hear of your welfare, which I de-
 " spair of doing till you prevail upon
 " yourself to be just to your first vows;
 " sacrifice the affection you have for me
 " to the obligations you are under to
 " my rival; — I yield to his prior title
 " all the late glorious hopes I had con-
 " ceived, and wish you more happy with
 " him than it is now in your power to
 " make

" Your humble servant,
 " AMASIS."

" Here ended all my hopes of happi-
 " ness; — all the soft ideas of love and
 " marriage vanish'd for ever from my
 " breast, and were succeeded by others
 " of the most dreadful nature: — for se-
 " veral weeks I abandon'd myself to
 " grief and to despair; but pride at length
 " got the better of these passions; and,
 " to conceal the real situation of my
 " heart from the enquiring world, I all
 " at once affected to be madly gay, and
 " ran into such extravagancies, as, with-
 " out being criminal in fact, justly drew
 " upon me the severest censures.

" But

“ But nature will not bear a perpetual
“ violence, — grief and despair were the
“ strongest passions in me; — in the
“ midst of dancing, drinking, revelling,
“ tears were ready to start from my eyes,
“ and sighs from my bosom, which,
“ when I endeavour'd to suppress, re-
“ coil'd upon my heart, and shook my
“ whole frame with the most terrible re-
“ vulsions; — the marriage of Amasis
“ seconded the blow our parting had
“ given; — I could no longer dissemble
“ what I felt, — no longer appear the
“ giddy thoughtless libertine, but flew
“ from one extreme to the other; — I
“ now would see no company, shut my-
“ self up in my chamber, denied access to
“ my best friends, and never went abroad
“ but to visit the hospitals and prisons:
“ — I never suffer'd Le Bris to come
“ into my presence; and I believe, per-
“ ceiving me so resolute, he would now
“ have accepted of a sum of money to
“ have quitted my house entirely; but I
“ had now done with the world; — had
“ lost in Amasis all I valued in it, and
“ would not give the monster, whom I
“ justly look'd upon as the source of all
“ my misfortunes, any more than I was
“ compell'd to do, — his bare board and
“ fallary.

“ Behold, by these memoirs, the beginning and progress of my miseries,—the end is near at hand, — death is already busy at my heart, and allows no time to apologize for the errors of my conduct; — pity is all my ashes can expect.”

C H A P. VIII.

Contains a very brief account of some passages subsequent to the foregoing story, with the author's remarks upon the whole.

AS I know very well that solidity has but a small share in the composition of the lady whom Alinda had intended to entrust with the publication of her memoirs, I thought the surest way of having the will of the deceas'd perform'd, was not to trouble a person of her character with the perusal of them, but to take the opportunity of my Invisibility-ship to present them to the world myself, which I accordingly have done.

And now, as I doubt not but the reader will be glad of being inform'd of somewhat

what farther concerning Le Bris, I shall relate such particulars as have come to my knowledge.

It must be concluded that this unworthy preceptor, in looking over the papers of Alinda, had either not observed, or afterwards forgot, that the ring he had just taken from among her other jewels was the very same mention'd in her letter to her friend, otherwise he would certainly have had cunning enough to have replaced it where he found it.

• Mr. ***** soon recollecting what his cousin had said to him in regard of this little legacy, and missing it from her other trinkets, made a strict enquiry what was become of it : — Le Bris, having had her keys in his possession, was one of the first interrogated, and on being so, boldly reply'd, that such a ring had been bestow'd upon him by Alinda. — ‘ How can that be, cry'd the other, — when but three days before her death she bequeath'd it to a lady of her acquaintance, and insisted on my promise of delivering it to her ? ’ — ‘ She must then be delirious said the parson ; but however that might be, heaven forbid I should detain what is even suspected to be the right of another ; ’ and with these words presented

presented the ring to mr. *****, who received it from him without the least ceremony.

This affair, notwithstanding the hypocritical manner in which the ring was return'd, gave mr. ***** room to imagine there had been some foul play in relation to Alinda's effects ; — the steward prov'd, by his books, that he had paid into her hands, a week before her death, two hundred and fifty pounds in specie, and more than twice that sum in Bank-bills, being arrears he had receiv'd from the tenants ; — it seem'd unlikely to them that she could have disposed of the money, much less have had any occasion to change the bills in so short a time ; — orders were therefore sent to the Bank to stop the payment of such numbers till further notice ; but the precaution came too late, — the person who had secreted them had been already there, and converted all his paper into cash.

The heir, however, was confident that he had been defrauded ; — he consulted council upon it, who all advised him to have recourse to equity : — whether Le Bris had any hint given him of what was intended to be done against him, or whether his own guilty conscience made him only

only apprehend it, is uncertain; but be that as it may, he had not courage to stand the test of examination, — he fled the kingdom, after having thrown aside that robe, which; had he been known for what he truly was, would long before have been stripp'd from off his sacrilegious shoulders.

But Providence would not permit him to enjoy his ill-got spoils, nor a life he had devoted to such wicked purposes; — designing to turn trader at Jamaica he embark'd for that place; — but the vessel being overtaken by a storm, was lost almost in sight of shore, and he with many other, perhaps less guilty persons, perish'd in the wreck: — this last piece of intelligence I received from his mother, who, tho' he had supported during the life of Alinda, to prevent being exposed by her clamours, he now left penniless, destitute and starving, in an extreme old age.

Thus did the vengeance of heaven at last overtake the wretch, who, besides his other impieties, had been guilty of the most cruel ingratitude and breach of trust, in imposing upon the simplicity of a young creature committed to his care,

care, and utterly destroying all the views, of his generous Patron and Benefactor.

As for the unfortunate Alinda, tho' it is certain her conduct cannot be wholly justify'd, yet, according to my opinion, neither ought it to be wholly condemned ; — it would be passing too severe a judgment, to impute the fondness she express'd for her wicked tutor to a wanton inclination : — if we consider the various arts of her seducer, — the commands laid on her by her father to love and obey him as himself ; — the manner in which she was brought up ; — the perfect ignorance she was kept in of the customs of the world, and how other young ladies behaved, we shall find that these are all of them very strong pleas in her defence, and not forbear pitying the mistakes of such artless innocence.

I wish as much could be alledg'd in her behalf on the score of her behaviour after breaking off with Amasis ; — the excesses into which she ran, in order to conceal the disquiets of her mind for the loss of that favourite lover, too evidently shew that she sacrificed two of the most valuable characteristics of womanhood, — her prudence and her modesty, to one of the very worst, — her pride.

Nor

Nor can I offer any thing in vindication of the last stages of her life, — if convinced of her error, in being perpetually among a promiscuous unselected company, it was flying to an almost as inexcusable extreme, to shut herself from her best friends, and avoid the society of those whose conversation might have dissipated her chagrin, and at the same time improved her understanding ; — to do this seems to me, I must confess, to have more the favour of despair; than of virtue or true fortitude.

There was, doubtless, a certain giddy propensity in her nature, which wanted to be corrected by reason, — example, — precept, — authority, and the rudiments of a good education, all which she was deny'd ; and it must therefore be acknowledg'd, that both her faults and misfortunes were entirely owing to the caprice and credulity of her father, and the base designs of the person appointed to be her governor and instructor.

End of the First BOOK.



THE

Invisible Spy.

BOOK II.

C H A P. I.

The Author, by the help of his Invisibility, has discover'd such a contrast in the behaviour of two married couple of distinction, as he thinks would be the utmost injustice to the public to conceal.



Lacentia, after a long and most passionate courtship, was at last wedded to Dalmatius ; — she brought him an ample fortune, a very agreeable person, and an unblemish'd character ; — she had studied all

all the duties of a wife before she became so, and afterwards practised them in the strictest manner: — whenever she found him gay, she heighten'd his good humour her own sprightliness; and when sullen and perverse, as was too often the case, she endeavour'd to dissipate his chagrin either by playing on her spinnet or telling him some diverting story: — without seeming to consult his palate, she always took care to put such dishes into her bill of fare as she had perceiv'd he fed upon with most satisfaction: — whatever company suited his taste were sure to be often invited by her, and entertain'd with the greatest marks of esteem and complaisance: — her whole thoughts, indeed, were taken up with obliging and making him happy: — she had no will, — no inclination of her own, — both were entirely regulated by his; and, to add to all this, she was an excellent œconomist, understood the management of a family perfectly well, and knew how to make a grand appearance with less expence than some others are at who are accounted contemptibly parsimonious.

What would some husbands give to be bless'd with so virtuous, so tender, so endearing a companion? Dalmatius, instead of placing this jewel next his heart,
hung

hung it carelessly upon his sleeve; either not knowing, or not regarding the true value of it.

During the course of several Invisible Visitations I made at their house, never did I see him treat her in any degree proportionable to her merit; — when in his best humours, he return'd the caresses she gave him only with a cold indifference; but when any thing abroad had happen'd to thwart his view, either of pleasure or ambition, no man could behave with more churlishness at home: — but the manner in which this couple behaved to each other will best appear from their own words, which I shall give a short specimen of on two different occasions.

They were to go out together one day, to call on some friends who were to accompany them on a party of pleasure, — the landau waited at the door, — he had just finish'd dressing, and sent up to know if his wife was ready; — the message could be scarce deliver'd before she came flying into the room, on which the following dialogue ensued:

Placentia. ‘ I hope I have not made you wait for me ?

Dalmatius. ‘ Not at all, — it wants
‘ some minutes of our appointment ; but
‘ I know you women are generally so long
‘ in equipping yourselves, that I was wil-
‘ ling to send a messenger to hasten you.’

Placentia. ‘ I should know but little
‘ of the value of time, if I wasted much
‘ of it in dressing. — But pray, my dear,
‘ how do you like me to day ?’

Dalmatius. ‘ Like you, — that’s an
‘ odd question ; — why — as well as ever
‘ I did.’

Placentia. ‘ I should be miserable if I
‘ did not think you did ; — but I mean,
‘ how do you like my cloaths ? — you see
‘ I am all in new.’

Dalmatius. ‘ Are you indeed ? I should
‘ have seen nothing of it if you had not
‘ told me : — I never mind what women
‘ have on.’

Placentia. ‘ Then I am disappointed,
‘ my dear ; for I assure you I consulted
‘ your fancy more than my own in the
‘ choice I made of this silk, as I have
‘ heard you say an hundred times, I be-
‘ lieve, that you thought blue and silver
‘ the

‘ the most agreeable mixture that could
‘ be.’

Dalmatius. ‘ So it is ; but it may not
‘ happen to become every body ;— how-
‘ ever, I must do you the justice to say,
‘ you look well enough in it, and I be-
‘ lieve every body will think so.’

Placentia. ‘ If you think so, my dear,
‘ it is all I wish.’

In speaking this she took hold of his hand and kiss'd it with the greatest warmth of affection ; — he return'd the favour with a slight salute upon her cheek, then looking on his watch, said he believed it was time to go, and went down stairs, she following.

The truth of the affair is this : — Dalmatius is not only vain and insolent in his nature, but also amorous and inconstant to an excess ; tho' he no longer had any eyes for the charms of his fair wife, his heart was but too susceptible to those of other women. — Miranda for some time engross'd all his devoirs ; nor could her being married to the most intimate of his friends restrain him from making his unlawful addresses to her ; nor the vow she had taken at the holy altar, deter-

ter her from gratifying an inclination he had found the way to inspire.

The husband of this lady is a man of so much indolence and so little delicacy, that he never gives himself the least concern about what pleasures his wife may indulge herself in, provided she offers no interruption to those he takes himself;—there are some, indeed, who say that on their marriage they mutually agreed to allow each other a perfect latitude in this point;—but be that as it may, Miranda seems under no apprehensions of her conduct being called in question by him.

Her amour with Dalmatius soon became so notorious that it was in the mouth of every one;—Placentia herself was the last that gave credit to it;—that excellent lady would not suffer her heart to entertain ill thoughts of the man whom she was bound to love, nor could any thing but the testimony of her own eyes have convinced her of the guilty truth.

Miranda came to visit her one day when she happen'd to be abroad; but Dalmatius being at home the presence of his wife was little wanted;—she soon return'd, however, and being told that

Miranda

Miranda was above ran hastily up to receive her ; but not finding her in the room where company were usually introduced, yet thinking she heard the murmur of voices very near, she stepp'd towards the place whence it seem'd to proceed, and peeping through the key-hole of an adjacent chamber, saw her husband and the lady in a posture such as could leave her no doubt of their criminal conversation.

The sudden shock at first transfix'd her feet ; — but presently recovering herself, she retired from the guilty scene and went into her own chamber ; where, finding her woman at work, she order'd her to go immediately down and forbid the servants to take any notice of her being come home : — ‘ I hear, said she, that Miranda is below, and I am not very well and would not see any company at this time.’

The woman being withdrawn to do as she was commanded, Placentia threw herself into an easy-chair and fell into a profound resvery ; — I was present all this while, but my Belt of Invisibility did not enable me to penetrate into her thoughts, till seeming as if determin'd on something she had been debating within herself,

herself, she rose suddenly from her seat and burst into these words :

Placentia. ‘ No,—he shall never know
‘ I think him false ; much less that I have
‘ detected him :—reproaches would avail
‘ me nothing, and might harden him in
‘ his crime ;—I am his wife, — we must
‘ always live together, or be subjected to
‘ the ridicule of a laughing and censorious
‘ world : — prudence, therefore, as well
‘ as duty, commands me to conceal the
‘ shameful discovery I have made ; and
‘ rather endeavour, by added tenderness,
‘ if possible, to reclaim him, and oblige
‘ him to see I am at least as worthy of
‘ his affection as Miranda.’

I left her in this resolution, and found that for several days she strictly adhered to it ; excepting only that she could not so far dissemble her uneasiness as to be able to receive Miranda in the manner she had formerly done ; she therefore desisted from making her any farther invitations to her house, and always excused herself from accepting any sent to her by that lady.

This was enough, however, to give the lovers some apprehensions that she suspected their intrigue ; — but Miranda

was of too vain and gay a temper to feel any inquietudes on this score ; and the ungrateful Dalmatius, finding himself treated by his wife with the same love and complaisance as ever, gave himself not the trouble either to examine, or be under the least concern whether such a behaviour proceeded from her ignorance of his fault, or her discretion in overlooking it.

But the sweetest nature may be embitter'd by continual provocations ; — Placentia, finding that all the efforts she made for regaining the affections of her husband were ineffectual, began by degrees to grow more remiss in her cares of pleasing ; — not that she ever departed from the essential duties of a wife ; — she only ceased the practice of those which, as the case stood between them, might justly be call'd works of supererogation.

Being to have a great rout at her house, just as she was going to send cards to invite the company, Dalmatius came into the room, and having looked over the catalogue of names, on finding Miranda's not there, began with an unusual haughtiness to interrogate her on that occasion ; and she, now, for the first time, reply'd to what he said with as much indif-

indifference as she had formerly done with submission.

Dalmatius. ‘ How happens it, madam, that Miranda is left out among the number of your guests?’

Placentia. ‘ I had forgot her.’

Dalmatius. ‘ It is well then that I reminded you; — but methinks a lady of her rank and character in the world might well have deserved a place in your remembrance.’

Placentia. ‘ It may be so; — but one cannot invite every body.’

Dalmatius. ‘ When any body is invited to our house, especially on these occasions, it would be the utmost absurdity to leave Miranda out; — therefore I insist upon her coming for your own sake.’

Placentia. ‘ Oh, sir, you need not give yourself any trouble on that score, I am certainly a judge how to behave to my own acquaintance; — but if you are so desirous of having Miranda here to-morrow, the best way is for you to send a card as from yourself; — I doubt

‘ not but the invitation will be full as
‘ agreeable, and as readily comply’d
‘ with.

Dalmatius. ‘ You talk in an odd man-
‘ ner, madam;—and now I think on it,
‘ — I met Miranda the other day in
‘ the Park, and she complain’d to me of
‘ a strange change in you towards her;—
‘ that you have never return’d the last
‘ visit she made you; — have scarce
‘ spoke to her in any public assembly,
‘ and seem’d to shun her presence as
‘ much as possible. — Pray what is the
‘ meaning of all this?’

Placentia. ‘ That, sir, is a question
‘ which perhaps neither you nor she
‘ would thank me for answering directly.’

Dalmatius. ‘ I understand you, ma-
‘ dam, however;—you have got notions
‘ in your head not becoming in you to
‘ indulge, nor worthy any endeavours
‘ of mine to expel;—I would only have
‘ you be wiser, and consider that of all
‘ domestic animals a jealous wife is the
‘ most contemptible.’

He flung out of the room with these words, and all the tokens of disdain and indignation in his countenance, leaving

Pla-

Placentia in a confusion not easy to be describ'd ; — I could perceive, however, by the gestures of that unhappy lady, that she repented having gone so far, yet knowing herself the only injured, could not yield either to recede from her resolution on the account of Miranda, or make use of any attempts to soften so ill-founded a resentment in her husband.

It is now said that his amour with Miranda is on the decline ; — that a new face has utterly eclipsed all the charms he lately found in hers ; and that Placentia has at least this consolation under her misfortune, to find that no one beauty has the power long to retain the heart she has lost ; — so just are the poet's words :

- ‘ When fix'd to one, love safe at anchor
 ‘ rides,
- ‘ And dares the fury of the winds and
 ‘ tides ;
- ‘ But losing once that hold, to the
 ‘ wide ocean borne,
- ‘ It drives at will, to ev'ry wave a
 ‘ scorn.

Marriage, tho' a sacred institution, — tho' ordain'd by heaven to bestow the supremest felicity we mortals are capable of enjoying, becomes the severest

curse, when souls ill suited to each other are join'd in its indissoluble bonds ; and it too often happens, that those who by nature and education are qualify'd to give and receive the greatest happiness, are render'd the most miserable through the perverseness of a bad temper'd partner.

Montelion has been twice married ; — he has experienced both all the contentments, and all the inquietudes of that state, with women of humours as widely different as light and darkness ; — I had almost said, as heaven from hell : — his first lady, as she was excell'd by none in exterior perfections, so she was equall'd but by very few in the more valuable endowments of the mind ; — his life, while in possession of this treasure, was one continued scene of harmony and love ; but soon, alas, the blissful prospect vanish'd ! — the fair, the virtuous, the tender Erminia died ; and, to add to the misfortune of her disconsolate husband, left no pledge behind her of their mutual affection.

Though in that season of life when amorous flames are at their highest bent, those of Montelion seem'd all bury'd in the grave of his dear Erminia : — he remain'd for several years the lonely occupier of a widow'd bed ; — at last, however,

the

the ardent desire of having an heir for his estate got somewhat the better of his melancholy, and determined him on a second venture.

In the choice he made he consulted neither fortune nor beauty; — the one, indeed, he wanted not; — and as for the other, since his Erminia's death, all women were equal to him, and he regarded the lovely and unlovely with the same indifference; — he therefore marry'd Ferocia, merely because she was one of the daughters of a fruitful family, and likely to answer the only end which induced him once more to become a husband.

Every body was astonish'd at these nuptials, and much more so on the knowledge of Ferocia's behaviour afterwards; — but I shall present my reader with the character of this lady, as it was given by an impartial hand in a letter to a friend.

Ferocia, now the wife of Montelion, is a woman plain in her person, — weak in her understanding, — capricious and fantastic in her humour, — unpolish'd in her manners; — and, what is worse than all, insufferably vain and insolent on her new dignity, without one grain of true

love or gratitude for the man who has raised her to it.

My Gift of Invisibility assisted me in proving the truth of the above in all its parts ;—further I will not pretend to say ; for tho' it is a vulgar Adage, that, ‘ Where there is no modesty, there is little sign of honesty ;’ and I have heard severe censures pass’d upon her virtue ; yet I never could make any discoveries to her prejudice on that score, and am apt to believe, that the rampant airs she gives herself among the men, are, in reality, more owing to a hoidenly than an amorous disposition.

Montelion seems to see her behaviour in the same light I do ; yet, for the sake of his own honour, cannot but wish she would act with more reserve.—They had not been married above three months when he was seiz’d with a fit of the gout which confined him to his apartment ;—Ferocia came in cover’d over with jewels and blazing like a star ; and, without expressing any concern for his indisposition, told him that she was going to lady Primwell’s route ; on which ensued the following dialogue between them :

Montelion.

Montelion. , I flatter'd myself, madam, with having the happiness of your company at home this evening, as I am not in a condition to stir out.'

Feroccia. ' Oh heavens! I should make the worst nurse in the world: What good would my staying do you ?'

Montelion. ' A great deal, madam, and I hope I need say no more to engage you not to leave me.'

Feroccia. ' Indeed, my lord, I must go, I have given my promise.'

Montelion. ' You will be easily excused ; — nobody will expect a wife on a party of pleasure, when they know her husband is confined by pain. — Come, my dear Feroccia, you must not think that staying at home one night is an act of too much complaisance to a man who would refuse nothing for your satisfaction.'

In speaking this he drew her gently towards him, and gave her two or three very tender kisses ; but in doing so a little snuff he had between his thumb and finger happen'd to scatter on her glove ; on

which she started from him and returned his kind expressions in these terms :

Ferocia. ‘ Pish, how silly this is ?—
 ‘ you have spoil’d my gloves with your
 ‘ nasty snuff.—Here John, William, run
 ‘ one of you to my dressing-room and
 ‘ bid Faddle bring me a pair of clean
 ‘ gloves in a minute.’

Montelion. ‘ Don’t put yourself into a
 ‘ passion, my dear, but sit down and re-
 ‘ solve to oblige me ;—I’ll call for cards,
 ‘ and we’ll have a game at picquet.’

She made no reply, but hung down her head, and stood counting the sticks of her fan till Faddle came into the room.

Ferocia. ‘ Where are the gloves ?’

Faddle. ‘ Madam, I thought the fel-
 ‘ low was mistaken when he bid me bring
 ‘ gloves, as your ladyship had just now
 ‘ a clean pair.’

Montelion. ‘ Aye, mrs. Faddle, there
 ‘ is no occasion ; rather get your lady’s
 ‘ night-dress ready ; for she has changed
 ‘ her mind, and does not go abroad.’

Ferocia.

Ferocia. ‘Indeed I both must and will, my lord.—Do you imagine that because you are sick I must mortify myself, and be mew'd up with you till I am sick too? — No, — no, I am not weak enough to comply with so unreasonable a request; therefore adieu till morning, I shall scarce see you till that time, and hope I shall then find your lordship better.’

She waited not for any reply he might have made, but flounced out of the room, follow'd by her woman.—Montelion soon after heard the footman call'd to attend her ladyship and the chariot drive from the door. — How would some husbands have resented such usage, even from the most lovely of womankind? yet Montelion bore it without any shew of impatience, from one endow'd with no charms to excite either love or respect; — his tameness, however, is not owing to any meanness of spirit in him, but rather to his good sense; — he does not care to have his domestic affairs become the talk of the town, nor to come to an open rupture with the woman he has made his wife; and having in vain essay'd all the means that prudence and good-nature could suggest, to bring her to a more reasonable

able way of thinking, he has at last given over the attempt; — seems not to regard whatever she does, but endeavours to lose the thoughts of his private disquiets in the toils of public business.

C H A P. II.

Relates a strange and most unnatural instance of bigotry and enthusiasm in a parent.

NOthing is so desirable as religion,— nothing so truly amiable as piety; —what blessings does it not diffuse to all who are within the reach of its influence? — from it all other virtues are derived, and by it alone are enabled to act with vigour; — yet how often have we seen this heavenly quality perverted into its very opposite; and, from the spirit of meekness, benevolence, mercy, charity and universal love, become the spirit of pride, contention, envy, hatred and persecution; — like the arch-angel, who, standing nearest to the throne of glory, precipitated himself into the lowest hell.

Bigotry.

Bigotry and superstition are the surest engines which the subtle enemy of mankind makes use of for our destruction ; — all other crimes carry their stings with them ; conscience reproaches us for doing amiss, and we fall not again into the like without extreme remorse and shame ; but the man posseſſ'd of this holy frenzy of the mind glorys in his perseverance, because he looks upon it as the highest virtue.

But this, indeed, is not an age in which errors of this nature much abound ; — it has been much more the fashion of late years, for people to laugh at and contemn all the duties of religion, than to be too warm in the practice of any of them ; — there are, however, some few examples of the contrary extreme, a melancholy proof of which I am now about to give.

A gentleman, whom I shall distinguish by the name of Flaminio, had attain'd to the age of 50, without having been known to be guilty of any one thing which could call in question either his honour, good nature, or good ſenſe : — he had lived ca-reſſ'd by his friends, respected by his acquaintance, and almost adored by his tenants and dependants ; — he had one ſon and

and one daughter, and having lost his wife in bringing the latter into the world, he never ventured on a second bed, but laid out all his cares on the education of these two darlings of his soul.

Adario, for so I shall call the son, having finish'd his studies to the satisfaction of all those who had the charge of instructing him, in order to complete the fine gentleman, was sent to make the tour of Europe, under the care of a discreet and experienced governor. — Isabinda, the daughter, remain'd at home with her father, and being extremely beautiful, and mistress of every accomplishment befitting her sex and rank, attracted the love and admiration of as many as had opportunity to be witness of her perfections.

Being such as I have describ'd, it may easily be supposed, that, in a town like this, there were not a few who declared themselves her lovers ; — Lysimor was among the number of those who had the least to fear, and the most to hope for, in his addresses to her ; — he had an agreeable person, — was descended of a good family, and was heir to an estate adequate to his birth :—he had been fellow-student with Adario, and though, being some years

years older, he had left the University before him, they had always kept up a correspondence ; — he was introduced to the acquaintance of the sister by the intimacy he had with the brother, who fail'd not, before he went abroad, to recommend his friend's pretensions to her in the strongest terms.

He it was, indeed, who alone had the secret to please her ; — her young heart presently distinguish'd him from all his rivals ; but her modesty and discretion would not permit her to give him any marks of the peculiar regard she had for him, till authoriz'd to do so by the person who she had always been taught to consider as the sole disposer of her fate.

Lysimor, who had also been bred in the most strict obedience, made not his court to Isabinda without having first communicated the passion he had for her to his father, and received his approbation ; — the two old gentlemen had afterwards an interview on this occasion ; and Flaminio, being perfectly satisfy'd with the proposals made by the other, readily gave his consent, on condition his daughter, whose inclinations he said he would never go about to force, should have no objection to the match.

The same evening, as they were sitting together at supper, Flaminio related to his daughter all that had pass'd between him and the father of Lysimor; and added, that he look'd upon him as a very deserving young fellow;—that his birth and fortune were unexceptionable; and that if she had no aversion to his person, he should be heartily glad of an alliance with him.

Isabinda blush'd like the sun just peeping from a cloud, on hearing her father speak in this manner, and could scarce recover herself from the glad surprize enough to tell him, that since he was pleased with such an union she should be all obedience to his will;—she said no more, but the soft confusion she was in, and the joy which she could not restrain from sparkling in her eyes, sufficiently testified how much her inclinations corresponded with her duty.—‘ Well then,’ resumed he, from this time forward receive Lysimor as the person by heaven and me ordain'd to be your husband.’

I leave it to my fair readers to conceive what delightful images must fill the mind of Isabinda, after this sanction to an affection which hitherto she had not

not dared to indulge, yet had it not in her power to subdue ;—for my own part, tho' I was present during all the conversation she had with her father on this head, I left the house when she retired to her chamber, which she did more early than ordinary that night, I guess, to have an opportunity of giving a loose to the transports of her mind.

As for Lysimor, the joy he felt on being acquainted with what his father had done for him was very much allay'd by the perfect ignorance he was in of having made any impression on the heart of his charming mistress ;—he went to visit her the next day, hoping, yet trembling for the event ; but soon the lovely maid put an end to his suspense, by assuring him, that for his sake alone she could resolve, without reluctance, on changing her condition.

Not only the lovers themselves, but both their parents also seem'd equally impatient for the consummation of these nuptials ;—a short day was appointed for the celebration ;—the articles of settlement and jointure were drawing up ; — new habits,—new coaches,—new equipages,—all necessary preparations were carrying on with the utmost expedition, when lo ! —

a sudden and unexpected storm bore down at once the pleasing prospect of their hopes, — for ever dash'd their expected joys, and spread a lasting scene of desolation and despair.—How vainly, alas, do we depend on mortal happiness?—the gaudy bubble fleets before us like the wind,—eludes our grasp, and mocks the idle chace,—as sir Robert Howard justly expresses it,

- ‘ Short is th’ uncertain reign and pomp
‘ of mortal pride ;
- ‘ New turns and changes ev’ry day
- ‘ Are of inconstant chance, the constant
‘ arts ;
- ‘ Soon she gives, soon takes away,
- ‘ She comes, embraces, nauseates you
‘ and parts.

Flaminio, from being the most cheerful, good-natur’d man that could be of his age, became all at once transform’d into the most sullen, gloomy, and discontented; — from expressing the utmost eagerness for his daughter’s wedding, he now appear’d wholly negligent of every thing relating to it: — when the father of Lysimor, and the lawyer employ’d to draw the marriage writings, went to his house, he order’d his servants to say he was from home; — made several tradesmen carry

carry back the things he had bespoke for the solemnity ;—and, in fine, put an entire stop to all he had been so solicitous in forwarding.

The father of Lysimor began to think himself affronted by this proceeding ; and both the lovers were amazed and troubled beyond description at it ; but tho' the young gentleman came once or twice every day to visit his dear mistress, Flaminio so carefully avoided his presence that he could get no opportunity of complaining to 'him, and Isabinda was too much terrified by the unusual austerity of of his looks to have the courage to open her lips to him on this score.

She was one afternoon alone in the fore parlour, waiting the approach of Lysimor, when her father, who was in a back room, call'd her to him ; — she immediately obey'd, and on her entrance was accosted by him in this manner :

Flaminio. ‘ Well, Isabinda, I suppose you expect Lysimor here presently ?’

Isabinda. ‘ Yes, sir, — it is near the hour when he generally visits me.’

Flaminio. ‘ His company may be
 ‘ spared at this time ; — I have something
 ‘ to say to you, and would not be inter-
 ‘ rupted ; — I have therefore given or-
 ‘ ders to the servants to tell him, when
 ‘ he comes, that you are gone abroad.’

Isabinda. ‘ He will scarce believe that ;
 ‘ — because I promised to take a walk
 ‘ with him in the Mall after tea ; but
 ‘ if you require my attendance I will dis-
 ‘ miss him the same moment he comes.’

Flaminio. ‘ No, it shall be as I have
 ‘ said ; — if you marry him you will have
 ‘ opportunities enough to see each other ;
 ‘ and if you do not, it will be best for
 ‘ you not to have settled your affections
 ‘ upon him.’

Isabinda. ‘ Sir, I should never have
 ‘ entertain’d the least thoughts of marry-
 ‘ ing either him or any other man with-
 ‘ out having first received your commands
 ‘ to do so.’

Flaminio. ‘ However that may be, —
 ‘ events we think most near, are often
 ‘ the farthest from being accomplish’d ;
 ‘ — and for that reason a young maid
 ‘ ought never to dispose of her heart till
 ‘ it is accompany’d by her hand.

Isabinda. ‘ I hope, sir, that Lysimor
has done nothing to forfeit the good-
will you once had for him?’

Flaminio. ‘ No, no, I have nothing
to say against the young gentleman ; —
and should still approve of him for a
son-in-law ; — but _____.’

Isabinda. ‘ But what! — I beseech you,
sir, keep me not on a rack more cruel
than death.’

Flaminio. ‘ I am sorry to see you so
much concern’d on his account ; — I
hoped to have found you more indiffe-
rent ; but, since your inclinations are
so deeply engaged, wish from my soul
there were a possibility for your union.’

. *Isabinda.* ‘ Ah, sir, what prevents it?’

Flaminio. ‘ A father’s everlasting hap-
piness or misery.’

These words, the emphasis with which
he utter’d them, and the horror that ap-
pear’d in his countenance, frightened the
poor young lady almost into fits ; — she
started, — trembled ; and, not able to
comprehend the meaning of what she
heard,

heard, the most terrible ideas came into her mind, and made her rather dread than wish an explanation.

She stood pale as a ghost, and motionless as a statue, while her father, greatly agitated, walk'd backwards and forwards in the room with irregular and disorder'd steps :—both remain'd speechless for some time ;—at last, — ‘ I cannot as yet, said ‘ he, bring myself to relieve the suspence ‘ I see you are in ; but will do it soon ; • — retire therefore, my dear Isabinda, ‘ to your chamber, continued he with a ‘ deep sigh, and invoke the almighty ‘ dispenser of blessings to give you that ‘ composure of mind, which can alone ‘ enable you to support chearfully what- ‘ ever fate he is pleased to ordain for ‘ you.’

She went to her chamber as commanded ; but whether to pray or weep I will not pretend to inform my readers : — I remain'd with Flaminio while he staid below, which was not long, then follow'd him up to his closet, where he shut himself in, plucking the door so hastily after him I had not time to enter ; but, peeping through the key-hole, I saw he had thrown himself prostrate on the floor, with his hands and eyes lifted up
to

to Heaven, seeming very earnest in devotion ; — I left him in this posture, and return'd home much surprised at what I had seen and heard.

Impatient, however, to get some farther light into an affair which at present appear'd so mysterious to me, I went the next morning to Flaminio's house ; — I enter'd Isabinda's chamber with a servant who was carrying in a dish of chocolate ; — that unhappy lady was sitting leaning her elbow on a table and her head upon her hand, — her eyes red with the late fallen tears, and all symptoms of despair and grief about her ; — but nothing being to be learnt here I went in search of Flaminio, whom I found in his dressing-room ; — he was in a musing posture, but had a countenance much more serene than the day before ; — I had not been many minutes with him before he rung his bell for a footman, whom he order'd to fetch Isabinda to him ; — she presently came, and I was witness of the following extraordinary dialogue :

Flaminio. ‘ Sit down, my child ; —
‘ I was to blame to leave you in the
‘ perplexity I did last night ; but it was
‘ occasion'd only by my too great ten-
‘ derness ; — I could not easily resolve to
‘ tell

‘ tell you a thing which I fear’d would
‘ make you wish I had lov’d you less.’

Isabinda. ‘ Sir, I have always look’d
‘ upon your paternal affection to me as
‘ the greatest blessing of my life.’

Flaminio. ‘ I believe you have; and
‘ I had never any cause to think you did
‘ not return that affection with an ade-
‘ quate proportion of filial love and duty.’

Isabinda. ‘ I flatter myself, sir, that
‘ no one of my actions has ever shewn
‘ the contrary.’

Flaminio. ‘ None, indeed, my dearest
‘ child; — I ought not therefore to have
‘ doubted of your ready compliance in a
‘ thing on which my soul’s eternal peace
‘ depends. — Tell me, my Isabinda,
‘ would you not willingly forego a trifling
‘ satisfaction to assure your father’s happi-
‘ ness both here and hereafter?’

Isabinda. ‘ I should else, sir, be
‘ strangely unworthy of the goodness you
‘ have shewn to me.’

Flaminio. ‘ Well then, my dearest
‘ Isabinda, I will no longer hesitate to
‘ make thee the confidante of a secret
‘ which

‘ which hitherto has never escap’d my own bosom ; — it is a story will very much surprise thee ; — but see thou mark me well, and be attentive to every particular I shall relate.’

Isabinda. ‘ You may be certain, sir, I will be so.’

Flaminio. ‘ Know then, that going into the country to take possession of that estate which you have heard devolved on me by the death of my uncle, I fell into the acquaintance of a young lady in the neighbourhood, called Harriot ; — she was handsome, — I had a heart entirely free, and I became, as I then thought, violently in love with her ; but marriage being a thing of too serious a nature to be agreeable to my inclinations at that time, the addresses I made to her were extremely private ; — such as they were, however, they succeeded but too well ; and, on my promising to make her my wife, obtain’d all the gratification my passion could require.

‘ Having finish’d the business which had brought me thither, I set out soon after on my return to London ; — Harriot took leave of me without much re-

‘ gret, being to follow in a few days,
‘ with her father and the whole family,
‘ the winter season coming on : — on her
‘ arrival she sent me immediate notice,
‘ and I provided a proper place for our
‘ private interviews, which were not sel-
‘ dom, my amorous desires being yet un-
‘ satiated.

‘ Perhaps her youth, her beauty, and,
‘ above all, the extreme tenderness she
‘ had for me, might have engag’d me
‘ for a much longer time, had not the
‘ charms of your dear mother render’d
‘ all those of the whole sex besides con-
‘ temptible in my eyes : — I ador’d her
‘ from the first moment I beheld her, —
‘ the flame she inspir’d me with was
‘ widely different from what I had ever
‘ felt before ; marriage was no more a
‘ bugbear to me ; — on the contrary, I
‘ burn’d, — I languish’d to be link’d in
‘ those glorious bonds with a person of
‘ such distinguish’d merit, and the means
‘ of attaining that felicity engross’d all
‘ my thoughts.

‘ I now made a thousand excuses to
‘ avoid meeting poor Harriot, and when
‘ her repeated sollicitations drew me
‘ sometimes to her, my behaviour was so
‘ cool, so chang’d from what it was, that
‘ she

• she could not but see into the cause ; —
• in fine, she grew jealous, inquisitive,
• and soon discover'd my honourable at-
• tachment.

• Tears, reproaches, and complaints,
• now furnish'd me with a pretence to
• quarrel ; — I told her I would see her
• no more, and indeed she put it out of
• my power to break my word ; for in three
• days after we had parted in this manner
• she died, — not without some suspicion
• of poison, as I have heard it whisper'd ;
• — but whether she had recourse, in rea-
• lity, to any such desperate method to
• rid her of a life she was grown weary
• of, or whether grief alone did the work
• of fate, I know not ; but am but too
• certain, that however that might be, my
• ingratitude was the cruel cause, though
• she was too generous ever to declare it,
• and not one of all her numerous kindred
• or acquaintance had the least intimation
• of the intercourse had been between us,

• The shock I felt on the first intelli-
• gence of this sad catastrophe is incon-
• ceivable, and would doubtless have
• made a lasting impression on me, if the
• progress I every day made in my court-
• ship to the object of my virtuous affec-
• tion, — the gaining her consent to be

‘ mine, — our marriage, and the hurry of
‘ pleasures attending that solemnity, had
‘ not too much taken up my heart to
‘ leave room for any other sensations than
‘ those of joy and transport.

‘ Events once obliterated from the
‘ mind, by others of greater consequence
‘ to our happiness, seldom or never re-
‘ cur to it again : — a long succession of
‘ years pass’d over without any remem-
‘ brance of the unfortunate Harriot ; and
‘ it is but very lately that the thoughts of
‘ her have begun to trouble my repose..

‘ But heaven would not suffer me to be
‘ always dead to a just sensibility of the
‘ crime I had been guilty of ; — not many
‘ nights ago, whether sleeping or awake I
‘ cannot pretend to be positive, I saw, —
‘ at least I thought I saw, the figure of
‘ that injur’d woman stand by my bed-
‘ side ; — I heard her too, with a voice
‘ hollow, yet sonorous as an echo, bid
‘ me repent, and attone for my past
‘ transgression.’ — “ How shall I attone !
“ cry’d I.” — “ Devote to heaven the
“ dearest thing you have on earth,” re-
‘ ply’d the phantom, and in that instant
‘ vanish’d from my sight.

‘ It is not possible for me to express,
‘ much less for you to conceive, the horrors I sustain’d after this amazing dream,
‘ or apparition, I know not which to call it; but am since convinced it was
‘ no other than my guardian angel, who, under the form of Harriot, instructed
‘ me how to atone for my crime; — and should I neglect or disobey his admonition, it would more than double my transgression and sink my soul down to the lowest hell.’ — “ Devote to heaven
“ the dearest thing thou hast on earth,” the vision said. — Now what have I on earth that is truly dear to me, except your brother and yourself? — I have examin’d well my heart, and find that of the two you sit the nearest there; — it is you therefore, my Isabinda, that is ordain’d to be the sacrifice; — and, like faithful Abraham, I must submit to lay my darling on the altar.’

Isabinda. ‘ Oh, sir, you will not kill me ! ’

Flaminio. ‘ Kill thee, my child, rather would I suffer this flesh of mine to be torn with burning pincers, — every limb dislocated, — my breast laid open, and my panting heart exposed to

‘ public view, than hurt the smallest part
‘ of thy dear precious frame ; — no, — I
‘ mean to present thee a living sacrifice on
‘ the altar of piety ; — to consecrate thee to
‘ the service of heaven, and to make thee,
‘ while on earth, a companion for the
‘ saints above ; — in fine, my Isabinda,
‘ you must be a nun.’

Isabinda. ‘ A nun, — oh heavens !’

This poor young lady seem’d no less terrified with the word nun than she had been with that of sacrifice ; — but my Tablets being quiet full with the conversation already recited, and my memory a little treacherous, as I confess’d in the introduction to this work, I can present the reader with no farther particulars on either side ; — all I can say is, that not all the obedience Isabinda had hitherto been practised in, nor all her father’s authority, nor the arguments he urged, could either reconcile her to the way of life he enjoin’d, or oblige her to submit to it with any degree of willingness ; and that her tears and intreaties being equally in vain to make him recede from the resolution he had taken, he dismiss’d her from his presence, telling her, in a very angry tone, that he had now done with persuasions, and should take

take measures to bring her to her duty more becoming his character as a father.

C H A P. III.

The author finds means, tho' with an infinite deal of difficulty, to make a discovery of some part of the unhappy consequences which immediatly attended the cruel resolution Flaminio had taken in regard to his daughter.

I Went no more to Flaminio's house that day, the greatest part of it being pass'd in transcribing the discourse inserted in the preceding chapter, and getting the impression expung'd from my christaline remembrancer :—I did not fail, however, to repair thither the next morning ; —but gain'd nothing by this visit ; — Flaminio was abroad,—Isabinda alone in her chamber, and the servants, from whose glib tongues I might have expected something would transpire, were all busied in their several occupations, and seem'd to think of nothing out of their own sphere.

I had never yet attempted to see how Lysimor brook'd the late delays had been

given to his intended nuptials, so now took it into my head to go ; — a servant, who was carrying out a wig-box, gave me an opportunity of slipping into the house ; — I found the old gentleman with a letter in his hand, which seem'd to excite in him very great emotions ; — but as he had just finish'd the perusal as I enter'd the room, and was putting it into his pocket, I could not possibly know any thing of the contents ; — I was not, however, long unsatisfied ; — Lysimor was return'd from a morning walk he had been taking, and enter'd a few moments after ; — he appear'd in little better humour than his father, and, when he had paid the usual salutaion, — spoke in this manner :

Lysimor. ‘ Certainly, sir, something very extraordinary must have happen'd to occasion this sudden change both in Flaminio and his daughter ; — I have been to enquire of her health this morning after being disappointed of seeing her last night, and have a second time been deny'd access.’

Father. ‘ I could have told you that, if I had known you had been there ; — I have just received a letter from Flaminio,

‘ mino, — see what the old coxcomb writes.’

With these words he drew the letter he had been reading from his pocket and threw it on a table, — Lysimor snatch’d it up with the greatest eagerness, and found the contents as follow :

“ S I R,

“ A N over-ruling fate deprives me of
“ the honour of your alliance, and
“ disposes of my daughter in a different
“ manner from what I once intended ; —
“ I must therefore intreat your son will
“ make no future visits at my house,
“ nor take any steps to traverse those
“ designs which I am oblig’d to pursue
“ in relation to Isabinda.

“ As for yourself, sir, I hope you will
“ impute this alteration in my conduct
“ to what it really is, — an unavoidable
“ necessity, and not to want of respect
“ in him, who in all things else would
“ readily subscribe himself,

“ Sir,

“ Your most humble, and
“ obedient servant,

“ FLAMINO.

Surprise and resentment now seemed to strive which should be most predominant in the countenance of Lysimor ; — he stamp'd, — bit his lips, — paused a while, then spoke.

Lysimor. ‘ This must be madness, — no man in his sences could possibly act thus. — What, — after expressing the highest satisfaction in the intended union between our families, — after the warmest professions of respect to you, sir, and of love to me, to affront both in so gross a manner, without the least cause given on our part ; — tis unaccountable, — tis monstrous ; — but I cannot think Isabinda shares in her father's frensy.’

Father. ‘ Whatever she does, it behoves you not to think on her at all ; — sooner would I have my family extinct, and my name perish to eternity, than have a branch of that stem grafted on a tree of mine ; — and I should be sorry to find you mean-spirited enough to retain a wish that way.’

What reply Lysimor would have made I know not, for the old gentleman was call'd hastily out of the parlour to one who waited for him in another room. —

Lysimor,

Lysimor, when alone, fell into a deep musing,—in which he sigh'd and frown'd alternately, and seem'd divided between his love and his resentment ;—but whatever his thoughts were, he had not opportunity to indulge them ; — a servant presented him with a letter, which he said was brought by a porter, who desired it might be given to his own hands, and waited for an answer.

Lysimor no sooner saw the characters on the superscription than the late paleness in his cheeks was converted into the most lively red ; — he broke the seal with trembling impatience and found it contain'd these lines :

“ DEAR SIR,
“ MY father, in an unaccountable ca-
“ price, tears me from your arms,
“ and is resolute to make me a nun ; or
“ rather a martyr of me. — Prayers and
“ tears are ineffectual to move him from
“ his purpose, — I have try'd both in
“ vain, and it is by flight alone I can
“ avoid a fate more dreadful to me than
“ all I can suffer by abandoning his pro-
“ tection ;—if you have compassion,—I
“ must not now say love, — assist me in
“ my escape : — I have made no inti-
“ macies,—have no confidants on whom

“ I dare rely in this distracting exigence,
“ and there remain not four and twenty
“ hours between me and the impossibility
“ of averting the doom that threatens me:
“ — I am at present a close prisoner in
“ my chamber, and to-morrow, early in
“ the morning, am to take coach for
“ Dover, thence to embark for Dunkirk,
“ under the care of a person whose vigi-
“ lance I cannot hope to elude, and who
“ is not to quit my sight one moment
“ till I am, beyond redemption, lodged
“ within the walls of a convent.—A girl
“ lately taken into the house, pitying my
“ distress, has promised to get this con-
“ vey'd to you, and also to grease the
“ hinges of the street door, that I may
“ go out with less noise when the family
“ are all in bed, which I believe will
“ be pretty early, as my father is too
“ much out of humour to see any com-
“ pany ;—if you will take upon you the
“ trouble to wait for me at the end of
“ our street, next the square, between
“ the hours of twelve and one, and con-
“ duct me to some place where I may
“ be secreted till the search, which doubt-
“ less will be made after me, is over, I
“ shall endeavour to earn a subsistence by
“ such ways as I am capable of and for-
“ tune shall present : — if you ever truly
“ loved me, you will not think this re-
“ quest

“ quest too presuming, but rather be sorry
“ for the sad accident that compels me
“ to make it.—I beg a line, in answer to
“ this, may inform me what I have to
“ depend upon from your good-nature,
“ and what hope remains,

“ For the forlorn,

“ And most wretched

“ ISABINDA.

The lover appear'd extremely touch'd with this melancholy epistle, and when he had finish'd threw his arms across his breast, and cry'd out,

Lysimor. ‘ Poor Isabinda, — what dæmon has taken possession of her father's brain ! — but I should be even yet more cruel to refuse the assistance she implores. — No, — love, honour, and generosity forbid it ; — whatever shall be the consequence I must, — I will defend her from the fate she dreads.’

He then call'd his footman, and bid him order the person who had brought this letter to wait for an answer at some distance from the house, lest his father should happen to see him, and be inquisitive from whom, and on what business he came.

Having

Having given these instructions, he ran hastily up into his chamber, where I follow'd, and saw him sit down to his buree and write in these terms :

TO ISABINDA.

“ My for ever dear ISABINDA,

“ WHATEVER are my sufferings in this
“ unexpected turn of our affairs, I
“ cannot be wholly unhappy while I
“ know you have had no part in the in-
“ flicting them.—Why do you unkindly
“ make that a request, which you ought
“ to be convinced you might command
“ from my affection? — I have devoted
“ myself entirely to your service; and
“ no change of circumstances can ever
“ make me withdraw a heart attracted
“ by so much beauty, and confirm'd in
“ its choice by so much merit.—Yes, my
“ charming Isabinda, I am unalterably
“ yours; and you may depend upon my
“ love and honour for every thing you
“ either do, or shall hereafter stand in
“ need of: — I shall employ this day in
“ procuring a proper place for your re-
“ ception; and shall anticipate the hours
“ you mention to watch for your en-
“ largement, which I pray heaven to
“ facilitate,

" facilitate, and bring you safe to the
" arms of,

" My dearest Isabinda,

" Your ever faithful and

" Most constant adorer,

" **Lysimor.**

He had but just dispatch'd this when his father came into the room, and with a voice and air vastly different from what he had a few minutes before assumed, spoke to him in these terms :

Father. ‘ I believe, son, I have interrupted your dressing ; — but no matter, — I bring you news to console you for the loss of your late mistress ; — my old friend, mr. Countwell, the banker, has been with me ; — his fair charge, Emilia, comes to town next week, and he has offer'd, for a small premium, to make up a match between you ; — he assures me she is a most lovely young creature, — is entirely independent of any one, and has twenty thousand pounds in her pocket, which is more than double the fortune you should have had with the daughter of that fool Flaminio.’

Lysimor.

Lysimor. ‘ I am greatly indebted to
‘ your goodness, sir, and to the confide-
‘ ration mr. Countwell has of me ; but,
‘ sir, you know I have long lov’d Isa-
‘ binda, and you must give my heart
‘ some time to wean itself from its former
‘ attachment.’

Father. ‘ Pshaw, — one woman, like
‘ one nail, will drive out the thoughts of
‘ another ; — your heart must be strange-
‘ ly stupefied, if it does not dance to the
‘ music of twenty thousand pounds : —
‘ remember, son, the estate you are to en-
‘ joy at my decease does not amount to
‘ quite sixteen hundred pounds per an-
‘ num ; and that I have been obliged to
‘ mortgage some part of it, to discharge
‘ the debts your extravagant elder brother
‘ contracted before he died ; — Emilia’s
‘ fortune will retrieve all. — Well, the
‘ breaking off your match with Isabinda
‘ is the most lucky thing that could have
‘ happen’d.

Lysimor. ‘ But, sir, we cannot be sure
‘ that the young lady will approve my
‘ suit.’

Father. ‘ Mr. Countwell will manage
‘ that, — he is a shrewd man, — he
‘ knows

‘ knows what he does, and will under-
‘ take nothing without performing it :—
‘ you have only to say a few fine things
‘ to Emilia, which you know well enough
‘ how to do, when once you get Isabinda
‘ out of your head.’

Lysimor. ‘ Sir I shall use my best en-
‘ deavours to obey you in every thing.’

Father. ‘ That is well said ; — I want
‘ no obedience but what is for your own
‘ interest, and will leave you to reflect
‘ how many charms there are in twenty
‘ thousand pounds, and then you will
‘ fall in love with the fortune, whether
‘ ever you do so with the lady or not.’

This conversation being ended, I re-collected that I had some affairs of my own to dispatch, and began to think of retiring ; but was prevented by Lysimor, who walking in a continued and very hasty motion about the room, obliged me to keep close in the corner where I had placed myself, and not venture to stir lest he should rush against me : — at first I was a little vex'd at this confinement ; but afterwards rejoiced heartily at it, as it gave me an opportunity of making a discovery which otherwise, perhaps,

haps, I should have found much more difficult to attain.

Lysimor, after ruminating for a considerable time, rung the bell for his footman, who, on his entrance, received for his first command to shut the door ; — that done, he made no scruple to inform the fellow, who I soon found was in all his secrets, of the concern he was in for Isabinda ; — the promise he had given of taking her under his protection ; and the vexation he was in to find a proper lodging for her, so that his father might not suspect he had any hand in her escape, nor her own be able to discover where she was concealed.

To this the man, after a pretty long pause, reply'd, — that he had a sister who was a widow, and lived in a very remote and obscure part of the town ; — that her house was clean, tho' small ; — that her family consisted only of herself, an infant sucking at her breast, and a country girl who did the business of a servant ; and added, that if the lady could content herself with so mean an abode, he was certain she might remain there concealed as long as she should think fit.

Lysimor

Lysimor seem'd overjoy'd at this proposal, and bid him go directly to his sister, apprise her of the affair as far as it was necessary, and give her a strict charge to prepare every thing in as decent a manner as she could for the reception of her fair guest.

The fellow went to execute his commission, and I slid softly round the room till I got to the door and follow'd him; but not to the place where he was going; for having already found, by the discourse he had with his master, the name and situation of the street, I had no business to take so long a walk, till something more material than the bare sight of it excited my curiosity.

Lysimor himself, however, was not more punctual to the time appointed by Isabinda than I was to know the issue of this adventure;—it wanted some minutes of twelve when I arrived at the corner of the square, and had but just posted myself under a lamp, when I saw Lysimor come muffled up in his cloak, and attended by his servant.

We had not waited above a quarter of an hour before we saw Isabinda steal out of her

her father's house, with a bundle under her arm almost as big as herself; — Lysimor, perceiving how she was loaded, made his man hasten to ease her of it; after which she rather flew than ran into the arms of her deliverer, for so she call'd him, — adding, — ‘ Oh can you pardon the trouble I have given you! — To which he reply'd, — ‘ Call not that a trouble which I shall always look upon as the greatest happiness of my life.’

I could hear distinctly little more of what they said to each other, the footman being between us: — they walk'd very fast through the square, and down a street which turned from it, where a hackney-coach waited to receive them, and, as soon as they were enter'd, drove away with all imaginable speed: — I had neither the will nor the power to pursue them, return'd home to reflect at leisure on the passages I had been witness of.



C H A P. IV.

Contains some farther and more interesting particulars of this adventure, and shews that people, by flying from one thing which they think would be a misfortune, often run into others of a nature much more to be dreaded.

MUCH as I had condemned Flaminio for his bigotted superstition, I could not wholly absolve Isabinda for the step she had taken; — I wonder'd not that she was fearful of being forced into a state of life which few ladies of her years would chuse; but I wonder'd that she was not also fearful of putting herself into the power of a man who loved her, and whom she passionately loved; — she must certainly either not have consider'd the dangers to which she might be exposed, or have depended too much on the strength of her own virtue.

Besides, she could not be so ignorant as not to know that no woman can be made a nun, any more than she can be made a wife, against her will; and a less share of courage

courage than she shew'd in this midnight elopement would have enabled her, on her entrance within the walls of the convent, to declare she had neither call nor inclination to receive the veil, on which neither the abbess nor the bishop of the diocese could have consented to her admission into holy orders.

It is true, that her father might have confined her there a pensioner as long as he thought fit; but as this would not have answer'd his end in devoting her to the service of the church, by way of propitiation for his offences, there is no doubt to be made but that he would shortly have recall'd her home; — and, perhaps too, been convinced of his folly in attempting a thing so absurd in itself, as well as cruel to his daughter.

I am sensible that many of my fair young readers will be apt to quarrel with me for my animadversions on Isabinda's conduct in this point, and cry out, — if they were in her place they would do the same; — it is very likely, indeed, that they would do so, and full as likely that they would meet with something to make them heartily repent of their inadvertency.

There

There are others again, who will say, — that they can have no compassion for whatever misfortunes may befall a girl who thus rashly throws herself under the protection of a man not akin to her; but I believe the number of those who are so hard-hearted will be very few, except some profest prudes, who exclaim violently against the least misconduct in public, yet make no scruple of giving themselves the greatest loose in private.

However, as people never were, nor ever will be all of the same way of thinking, it would doubtless have been the most prudent in me, not to incur the ill-will of any, to have conceal'd my sentiments on this matter, and left every one to judge as they pleased: — I have been something too open, I confess, and tho' my disinclination to waste paper will not permit me to blot out what I have already said, I promise to be hereafter more circumspect, and confine myself to the bare recital of such facts as shall come within my cognizance, without pretending to intrude my own opinion on the motives which occasion'd them.

To return, therefore, to the melancholy detail I am now upon; — having little

little to do with my time the next morning, I went to the house where I knew Isabinda was placed for shelter from her father's power ;—I gain'd an easy access, the door being open, as is generally the custom in mean houses : — on my going up stairs I found the unhappy beauty sitting in a very pensive posture, leaning her head against the corner of a cupboard, which I suppose serv'd her for a larder, for I saw a small slice of butter and the remains of a halfpenny roll lying on a coarse earthen plate ; frequent sighs issued from her breast, and some tears fell from her lovely eyes : — strange, indeed, would it have been if a young lady, bred up in all the delicacies of life, could have worn a cheerful countenance in such a change of situation ;—tho' as the fellow had told his master, the room and all the furniture it contain'd was extremely clean, and shew'd the housewifry of the owner, yet nothing could have more the face of poverty.

She seem'd buried, as it were, in a profound contemplation, when the sound of somebody coming up the stairs made her raise her head a little, probably guessing from whom it proceeded,—Lysimor presently appear'd, and, on sight of him, a dawn of joy overspread her face ;—he ran

ran to her,—embraced her, and said the most tender things, intermix'd with some expressions of concern, that the necessity of her being conceal'd left him not the power of providing a place for her more suitable to her merit and his affection;—she could not now restrain her tears from flowing, which occasion'd the following discourse:

Isabinda. ‘ Ah, Lysimor, I beg you
‘ will not talk to me in this manner;
‘ but rather use all your rhetoric to assist
‘ my weak endeavours to suit my humour
‘ to my condition:—to be easy, I must
‘ forget what I have been, and wish to
‘ be no more than what I am.’

Lysimor. ‘ You never can be other
‘ than the most charming and most
‘ worthy of your sex.’

Isabinda. ‘ Alas, I have no longer any
‘ pretence to compliments like these;—I
‘ have now, as the poet says,’

No name, no family to call my own,
But am an out-cast, and a vagabond.

‘ As such I must hereafter live;—and
‘ that I may lose all remembrance of my
‘ former state, I have brought away my
VOL. I. K * jewels

“ jewels and best apparel, for no other
 end than to dispose of them, and pur-
 chase others more conformable to my
 future circumstances.”

Lysimor. ‘ Torture not thus a heart to
 which you are dearer than the vital
 blood that gives it motion. — Can you
 believe I would suffer you to part with
 any of those appendixes to your birth
 and rank? — no, — I would rather add
 to them.—Do you not know that my
 whole fortune is at your devotion?’

Isabinda. ‘ I must not, sir, accept it.’

Lysimor. ‘ Why not accept? too scru-
 pulous Isabinda! — But if you are
 above receiving the tribute of a lover,
 command whatever you may have oc-
 casion for on the score of a brother;—
 my dear Adario, I know, will readily
 discharge the obligation.’

Isabinda. ‘ I am sure he will; and,
 on that condition, if Providence pre-
 sents no other way for my support,
 will not refuse your generous offer.’

Lysimor. ‘ Think then no more of
 submitting to any thing unworthy of
 your character; — I flatter myself our
 mis-

‘ misfortunes are not of long continuance ;
‘ — that your father will repent him of
‘ his cruel resolution, and mine forget
‘ the affront offer’d to his family, and
‘ we may yet be happy.’

Isabinda. ‘ I dare not entertain a hope
‘ so distant.’

Lysimor. ‘ You know not how pro-
‘ phetic my passion may prove ; — in the
‘ mean time I should be glad, methinks,
‘ to be made acquainted with the motive
‘ that has caused this sudden revolution
‘ in our fate.’

Isabinda. ‘ Tho’ I am loth to expose
‘ the secrets, I might say the follies, of
‘ a father, — yet I can refuse you no-
‘ thing.’

Perceiving now that she was preparing herself to make a detail of those particulars I had heard before, and in a preceding chapter have communicated to the reader, I would not stay to hear a second repetition, but came away and left the lovers together for that time.

From thence I went to the house of Flaminio, where I found, as I expected, every thing in distraction ; — messengers

running backwards and forwards ;—some returning from their fruitless search of Isabinda, — others going to places where they had not before been sent ;—and the old gentleman himself so overcome with rage and grief, that he was scarce capable of giving the necessary orders for what he most desired.

— Some other adventures, which I shall hereafter publish, then falling in my way, I had no leisure to make a second visit to Isabinda for the space of near three weeks ; — but how shall I express my concern for that unfortunate young lady, when on my going thither I found her in the manner I did ; and that all the apprehensions I had been in on her account had but too solid a foundation ?

When wild desire presides over the heart of man, what is his boasted honour ?—what his virtue ?—what his regard for the happiness and reputation of the woman he pretends to love ? — all shadowy nothing, — vain ideas, which, like the Sybil's words wrote on the leaves of trees, are blown off and scatter'd thro' the air with every gust of passion ; — but to proceed,

No obstruction being in my way, I pass'd directly up to Isabinda's chamber; but, finding the door fast lock'd, began to imagine she was either removed or had ventured out to take the air, and was going down again, when I was prevented by the murmuring sound of persons talking within; — I then put my ear close to the key-hole, and easily knew the voices to be those of Lysimor and Isabinda; on which I resolved to wait till the door should be open'd, and in about three or four minutes after the woman of the house came up with two dishes of chocolate and some biscuits on a plate; — she had the key in her pocket, and immediately gave entrance to me as well as herself.

It was now more than past mid-day, yet Isabinda had not left her bed, — Lysimor was sitting on the side of it as lately risen, having both his feet on a chair, without either shoes or slippers: — I was a little surprised at seeing him in this posture, till the chocolate being served, he said to the woman,

Lysimor. ‘ Has Jeffery prepared my boots, as I directed last night?’

Woman. ‘ Yes, an please your honour,
— he has so besplash’d them, and made
the horse’s heels so dirty, that one
would swear they had come a journey
of twenty miles at least this morning.

Lysimor. ‘ That’s right ; — it would
have been ridiculous, after telling my
father that I was going on a hunting-
match with some gentlemen, to have
come home as clean as out of a lady’s
bed-chamber, and perhaps made the
old gentleman suspect some part of the
truth : — but go and bid Jeffery bring
up the boots.’

Lysimor spoke this with a very gay
air ; but Isabinda hung down her head,
and on the fellow’s coming in hid her
face behind the curtain, nor utter’d a
syllable while he was in the room, which
was no longer than to equip his master
for departure.

Lysimor was no sooner ready, and his
servant withdrawn, than he approach’d
the bed and began to take his leave of
Isabinda with a very tender embrace, ac-
company’d with some soft words ; — she
made no other reply for a considerable
time

time than returning his caresses ; but at last broke out into these expressions :

Isabinda. ‘ Ah, Lysimor, should you
‘ forget your vows, — despise the con-
‘ quest you have gain’d, and leave me to
‘ lament my easy faith, how miserable,
‘ how abandon’d beyond the power of
‘ words to express, would be the condi-
‘ tion of your Isabinda ! ’

Lysimor. ‘ Unkind and causeless ap-
‘ prehension ! — My dearest love, let not
‘ the thoughts of such impossibilities
‘ disturb your gentle breast ; — could I
‘ be ungrateful, after being made happy
‘ in this proof of your affection, I must
‘ be lost to all sense of honour, — un-
‘ worthy of the name of man, and even
‘ to breathe vital air.’

Isabinda. ‘ Well then, — I must, —
‘ I will believe you, — nor repent what
‘ I have done ; — but tell me, when will
‘ you come again ? ’

Lysimor. ‘ To-morrow, if I can ; —
‘ if not, you may depend on seeing me
‘ next day ; — be assured that every hour
‘ will seem an age to me till I renew my
‘ joys : — farewell, thou softest, loveliest
‘ of thy sex.’

He went, but, as I then fancy'd, with more the air of triumph than of real tenderneſs or respect in his deportment ; — Isabinda then call'd for the woman of the house to assist her in rising, and I left the place with a heart full of forebodings for her future fate ; indeed I truly pitied the ruin'd maid, and wish'd she never might have occasion to cry out with Monimia in the tragedy :

‘ ————— How often has he sworn
‘ Nature should change, the sun and
‘ stars grow dark,
‘ E're he wou'd falsify his vows to me ?
‘ Make haste, confusion then ; — sun
‘ lose thy light,
‘ And stars drop down with sorrow to
‘ the earth,
‘ For he is false ;
‘ False as the winds, the water, or the
‘ weather ;
‘ Cruel as Tigers o'er their trembling
‘ prey :
‘ I feel him in my breast, — he tears
‘ my heart,
‘ And at each sigh he drinks the gush-
‘ ing blood.’

My curioſity having received this painful ſatisfaction, I imagined not that any farther

further discoveries, at least that would be material enough to compensate for the trouble I should take, could be made in relation to these lovers, and therefore thought of returning no more, either to the apartment of Isabinda, or to the house of Lysimor.

I should, indeed, have endeavour'd to lose all memory of this unhappy transaction, if the talk of the town had not continually reminded me of it; — every one was full of Isabinda's flight; — few, if any besides myself, were acquainted with the motive of it; and none knew to what place she was retir'd: — and the perfect ignorance people were in on both these scores occasion'd various conjectures, and render'd the wonder much more lasting than otherwise it would have been...

But this was not all; — Flaminio, pierced through with grief and indignation on not being able to find his daughter; and perhaps too with some mixture of remorse for the cause he had given her to leave him, fell into a violent fever, of which he died, after languishing some days...

By his last testament he bequeath'd to his daughter, if ever she should be found,

the sum of three thousand pounds, in order, as he caused it to be express'd in the writing, to keep her above the contempt of the world ; and likewise, by the smallness of the portion, to keep her in perpetual remembrance of the false step she had taken.

Soon after this I received certain intelligence, that Lysimor was making his public addresses to a fine young lady with a very large fortune ; — I doubted not but this was that same Emilia whom I had heard his father so strongly recommend, and was fired with the utmost impatience to see how poor Isabinda would behave on both these events ; accordingly I went once more to the house where she had been concealed ; but, to my great disappointment, found she was gone from thence ; nor could all my search, joined with the assistance of my Invisible Belt, enable me, for some time, to discover to what part of the town or country she was removed.



C H A P. V.

Completes the catastrophe of this truly tragical adventure.

A DARIO had proceeded on his travels no farther than Paris, when the account of his father's death oblig'd him to return to England with all possible expedition : — soon after his coming I made an unseen visit at his house, where I found him, not like most young heirs, exulting in being the entire master of himself and fortune, and contriving in what kind of luxuries he should dispose of both, but full of the most sincere and unaffected sorrow.

He was, indeed, one of those few sons who look on the possession of an estate as no equivalent for the loss of a good parent, such as Flaminio ever had been to both his children, till that fatal caprice which drove his daughter from his protection, — had brought on her undoing, — his own death, — and was the source of other calamities of a yet more dreadful nature, as will presently appear.

The story of Isabinda's elopement, and the uncertainty what fate had since attended her, was a matter of great affliction to this young gentleman ; — he loved his sister with a very tender affection, and had hoped to have seen her by this time married to Lysimor ; but as his esteem for that friend was no way lessen'd by the match being broke off ; and besides, expecting to be better inform'd by him of the particulars of that affair, than he could be by any other person, he was impatient to see him, and I found had sent him that morning notice of his arrival ; for a letter, in answer to his message, was deliver'd to him while I was there, the contents whereof were these :

To ADARIO.

" SIR,

" I Congratulate your safe return to
" England, and should gladly have
" paid my compliments to you in person,
" if that honour had not been prohibited
" by an authority which I must not pre-
" sume to contend with ; — my father,
" resenting the affront given by yours,
" which you cannot but have been in-
" form'd of, has forbid me, under the
" penalty of his eternal displeasure, to
" converse

“ converse with any of your family ;—
“ he was at home when your servant
“ came, and heard the message you sent
“ deliver’d to me, on which he repeated
“ his former injunction, and exacted a
“ solemn oath of my obedience to it ;—
“ you will therefore pardon my not wait-
“ ing on you, and believe that the discon-
“ tinuance of our acquaintance will al-
“ ways be extremely regretted by him
“ who is,

“ With all due respect,

“ SIR,

“ Your most humble and

“ Most obedient servant,

“ LYSIMOR.”

‘ Alas,’ cried Adario, throwing the letter from him as soon as he had read it, ‘ how cold, how distant is the air of this letter,—how different from those I have been accustom’d to receive from Lysimor ! — I find that by one unlucky accident I have at once lost a father, a sister, and a friend.’

This epistle seem’d to increase his melancholy, and he sat in a deep reverie till the entrance of some persons roused him from it, and I quitted the house, perceiving

ceiving they were only tenants, and came on business relating to the estate, into which I had no curiosity to enquire.

I thought that I had now entirely done with this family; for as Isabinda was not to be found, I expected nothing of consequence could be learn'd either at the house of Lysimor or Adario, so intended to make no more visits to those gentlemen; — chance, however, about five months afterwards, changed my resolution, and threw something in my way which no diligence of my own could ever have attain'd.

As I was going one morning on my Invisible Progression I happen'd to pass by the house of Adario, — he was at the door, and about to step into a hackney-coach which waited for him, when a fellow, who had the appearance of a groom, came running towards him, almost breathless with the haste he had made, and cry'd out, — ‘ Oh, sir, I have joyful news for you; — I beg your honour will turn back and hear it.’ — These words reviv'd all my former curiosity, and, finding Adario comply'd with his servant's request, I follow'd them into the parlour, and was witness of the ensuing discourse:

Groom.

Groom. ‘ Oh, sir, I have seen my young lady.’

Adario. ‘ What young lady? — Not my sister!’

Groom. ‘ Yes, indeed sir; — as I was going to fetch the horse your honour sent me for, I saw madam Isabinda looking through the window of a house at the corner of a little lane just by Islington.’

Adario. ‘ Are you sure it was she?’

Groom. ‘ As sure as I am alive, sir; — though, poor lady, she is much alter’d, — very thin and pale.

Adario. ‘ I fancy you are mistaken; — if my sister were so near London, she would certainly either have sent or come to claim the legacy left her by my father, which I suppose she has need enough of by this time; — I am resolved to be convinced notwithstanding.—Do you think she lodges there?’

Groom. ‘ Yes, sir, for she was all undres’d, and look’d as if she was just out of bed.’

Adario.

Adario. ‘ And can you know the house again?’

Groom. ‘ O, yes, sir; — I took particular notice of it; — there is a pretty big area before it, with a hatch painted brown, and an high tree on each side.’

Adario. ‘ Well then, — I will only send an excuse to the gentleman I was to meet this morning, and go directly thither; — you shall get up in the coach-box and order the fellow where to drive; — but let him stop short of the house, that my sister, if it be she, may not be apprised of my coming before she sees me.’

While Adario was calling one of his footmen to send on the message he had mention’d, I ran to the end of the street, went into a narrow dark passage, and pluck’d off my Belt; — then, having recovered the appearance of what I am, a real substance, I popt into an empty coach that had just set down a fare, bid the driver to follow wherever that went which he saw standing at Adario’s door..

Both the coaches drove with such speed that we soon reach’d the end of our little journey;

journey ; — I quitted my vehicle the moment I saw the other preparing to stop ; but tho' I made all imaginable haste to put on my Belt, I could scarce have regain'd my Invisibility time enough to have enter'd with Adario, if he had not met with an obstruction in his passage from the woman of the house, who at first deny'd she had any lady lodg'd with her ; — then faid, she had none of the name he enquir'd for ; — on which he reply'd with some heat, — that the lady might have reas ons for concealing her real name ; — ‘ But tell her, cry'd he, ‘ that mine is Adario ; — that I am her brother, and must needs see her.’ — On this she seem'd somewhat more compli-able, and said she would go and acquaint the lady ; — accordingly she went up stairs ; but Adario was too impatient to wait her return, and follow'd her directly ; — I was but one step behind him, and we were both in the room before she could deliver any part of her message.

Ifabinda was adjusting something about her dress before a looking-glass ; but hap-pening to turn her head just as Adario was within the door, shriek'd out, — ‘ Oh heavens, my brother ! ’ — and with these words fell back in her chair.

The woman went to fetch some water, — Adario ran to support the fainting fair ; but happening to cast his eyes upon the table saw a letter lying there, the superscription of which was in Isabinda's hand, and address'd to Lysimor ; — emotions more strong than pity at this time made him quit his sister to examine the contents of this surprising billet, which were these :

To LYSIMOR.

“ My dear, dear LYSIMOR,

“ FOR such you are, and ever must
“ be to my fond doating heart ; tho'
“ I have too much cause to fear the ten-
“ der epithet is now no longer pleasing
“ to you. — Ah, Lysimor, how sad is
“ the reverse of my condition ! — from
“ seeing you twice or thrice every week,
“ I now see you not once a month ; —
“ and even then how cold is your be-
“ haviour ? — how short your visits ? —
“ how cruel is this to one who neither
“ can, nor wishes to enjoy any conver-
“ sation but yours ? — For pity's sake,
“ if not for love, render my life more
“ easy, at least for the present, whatever
“ you do hereafter ; — the infant I carry
“ within me sympathises in its mother's
“ anguish,

" anguish, and continually upbraids you
" with convulsive heavings: — even if
" your vows of everlasting constancy
" should be forgot, let some considera-
" tion of the unborn innocent, the pledge
" of our once mutual loves, oblige you
" to treat with less indifference its un-
" happy mother,

" *The ruin'd Isabinda.*

" P. S. I can no longer bear your ab-
" sence, else would not have troubled
" you with this complaint."

What a letter was this to fall into a brother's hands! — Never did I see a man in such distraction. — ' Villain, — villain Lysimor! — wretched Isabinda, cry'd he out; — then turning towards her; — but there needed not this proof in thy own hand, added he, thy shame is but too visible.'

Isabinda, who by the assistance of the woman was now recovered from her swoon, but not enough to hear what her brother said, threw herself at his feet, and with streaming eyes address'd him in these terms:

Isabinda. ' Oh, sir, can you forgive
my concealing myself from you?'

Adario.

Adario. ‘ Would to God that there
‘ were equal reason to forgive the cause.’

Isabinda, at this instant turning up her eyes, beheld her letter in his hand, and cry’d out with the greatest vehemence,

Isabinda. ‘ I am now undone, indeed,
‘ — irrecoverably lost to all hope of par-
‘ don or of pity! — my shame exposeth
‘ him from whom of all the wor-
‘ should have most been hid.’

Adario. ‘ Rise, sister, and cease these
‘ unavailing exclamations; — your shame
‘ will receive no addition by my know-
‘ ledge of it; — rather, perhaps, be re-
‘ medied.—But tell, — and tell me truly,
‘ — has Lysimor ever promised marriage
‘ to you?’

Isabinda. ‘ A thousand and a thousand
‘ times, and bound himself to the perfor-
‘ mance by the most solemn impreca-
‘ tions.’

Adario. ‘ Then he is doubly a villain;
‘ — and, if you believe him, you are
‘ doubly deceived; — he courts another
‘ woman.’

Isabinda.

Isabinda. ‘Indeed, of late, I have suspected this, and often accused him of it;—and he as often has forsworn it.’

Adario. ‘Mere words of course:—but say,—have you no testimony under his own hand of the promise he made you, either by letter or by formal obligation?’

Isabinda. ‘None,—none, alas!’

On this Adario bit his lips, — walk’d two or three times about the room,—then paused and seem’d as if debating within himself in what manner he should behave; at last sat down, and taking the still weeping Isabinda by the hand, endeavour’d to asswage her grief.

Adario. ‘Come, Isabinda, dry your tears;—love and credulity have seduced your innocence;—great has been your fault;—but yet I cannot forget you are my sister, and that you have no friend but me on whom you can depend for consolation: — what is past cannot be recall’d, but it may be redress’d: — be assured you shall one way or other have justice.’

Isabinda.

‘ *Isabinda.* ‘ Ah, sir, I beseech you
‘ proceed not to extremities ; — if by my
‘ crime you should be involved in any
‘ danger or perplexities, it would sink
‘ me quite.’

‘ *Adario.* ‘ I hope there will be no occa-
‘ sion ; — Lysimor was once a man of
‘ honour, and may yet return to his first
‘ principles : — on this you may rely, —
‘ that I shall do nothing rashly nor in-
‘ consistent with your interest and reputa-
‘ tion.’

After this they fell into some discourse concerning the strange resolution Flaminio had taken of sending her to a monastery, the particulars of which the reader being already acquainted with, I shall pass over in silence.

When Adario took his leave, he did it with a great deal of affection ; but I was much divided in my thoughts, whether I should stay with Isabinda, or follow Adario home ; — the latter seem'd most flattering to my curiosity, as by many tokens I perceived he had something in his head which he was impatient to put in execution.

I was

I was not deceived in my conjectures, — Adario was no sooner in his own house than he flew to his buree, and without taking any time for deliberation wrote this epistle:

To LYSIMOR.

“ SIR,

“ Conscious guilt, without those commands you seem so zealous in observing, might well make you avoid the presence of a person you have so greatly injured: — when I recommended you to my sister, it was in order to become her protector, — not her undoer; — how cruelly you have abused this confidence, let your own heart remind you; — but I have some hope, how much soever appearances at present are to the contrary, you still intend to do justice to your promises to Isabinda, and the claim she has to your affection: — I need not tell you that you can repair the misfortune you have brought upon her no otherwise than by an honourable marriage; — I am ready to fulfil the agreement made between our fathers on that score, and give my sister the sum of eight thousand pounds, as was then stipulated; — if you comply with

" with this proposal I shall be glad to
 " see you at her lodgings, there to settle
 " every thing ;—if not, shall expect you
 " will meet me in another place, and
 " give me that satisfaction which every
 " gentleman has a right to demand when
 " he finds himself ill used : — I attend
 " your determination, and am

" Yours, &c.

" ADARIO.

He sent this by one of his servants, with a charge to give it into Lysimor's own hands, and wait his answer ; — after which, being told dinner was ready, he went down and placed himself at the table, tho' I believe with very little appetite ;—for his countenance had upon it all the marks of the greatest inward disturbance, which was not at all lessen'd when his man returned with this from Lysimor :

To ADARIO.

" SIR,

" SINCE I find you are so well acquainted with a secret, which, for the lady's sake, I could wish had been inviolably kept, I think myself obliged to deal sincerely with you on the occasion ;
 " — you

" — you may be assured I can behave
" to no woman, much less your sister,
" otherwise than becomes a man of ho-
" nour; — but marriage is a thing quite
" out of the question, as I am certain
" my father never would consent to it:
" —if any promises on that account ever
" escaped my lips, I remember nothing
" of them, and could make them with
" no other view than to give her modesty
" an excuse for yielding: — I am sorry,
" however, for what has happen'd, but you
" cannot be insensible of the frailties of
" flesh and blood, and must know, as
" well as I, that when two young people,
" who like each other, are much alone
" together, such accidents will naturally
" occur. — The resentment you threaten,
" on my non-compliance with your pro-
" posal, appears therefore to me a little
" unreasonable; — I shall, notwithstanding,
" be ready to give you the satisfa-
" tion you desire, at any time or place
" you shall appoint.

" Yours, &c.

" LYSIMOR.

All the blood now seem'd to have for-
sook the heart of Adario to rush into his
face; — his lips trembled, — his very eye-
balls started with excess of passion; — he

hesitated not a moment on what he should do, but in this tempest of his mind wrote as follows :

To LYSIMOR.

" SIR,

" I Want words to return the insolence
 " and ingratitude of your reply ; but
 " have a sword at your service, which I
 " expect you will try the metal of to-
 " morrow morning about seven, in the
 " field behind Montague-house :—as the
 " dispute between us will admit of no
 " witnesses, pray come alone, to

" ADARIO.

Tho' I knew my own dinner waited for me, I could not prevail on myself to go home, till Adario had dispatch'd this billet to Lysimor, and the servant who carried it was come back from that gentleman with a small slip of paper tied up, containing only these words :

To ADARIO.

" SIR,

" YOU may depend that I shall not
 " fail to meet you as desired.

" LYSIMOR.

I now

I now quitted the house of Adario; but after having related the pains I had already taken, I believe nobody will suppose I neglected going the next morning to the field, to see the issue of this combat: — I found Adario was there first; but tho' he waited only a very few minutes for Lysimor, his impatience made him not forbear saluting him in this manner:

Adario. ‘ I began to think, Lysimor, that the shame of having done a base action would not suffer you to defend it.’

Lysimor. ‘ Sir, whatever I dare do, I always dare defend.’

Adario. ‘ Then, sir, this is no time for words.’

Lysimor. ‘ I am ready for you, sir.’

Here ceased all farther speech between them, and on the part of Lysimor for ever; — on the second push Adario ran him quite thro’ the body; — he fell that instant, and expired with only a single groan; — his successful antagonist approach’d the body, and finding life was totally extinguish’d, gave a sigh or two

to the memory of a man he once had call'd his friend, then made the best of his way home, in order to provide for his own security, which the likelihood there was of the challenge he had sent to the deceased being found, render'd highly necessary.

The measures he took, indeed, were very prudent; — he sent immediately to hire a post-chaise, which was to wait for him in a street he mention'd, at some distance from that in which he lived; — carry'd no baggage with him, but order'd a servant to follow him with it to Calais; — staid no longer at his own house than to write two short letters; — the one to a gentleman who had been one of the executors of his father's will, which being only on family-affairs need not be here inserted; — the other was to his sister, and contain'd these lines:

TO ISABINDA.

" SISTER,

" FAILING to repair your wrongs by
" the way I hoped, I have reveng'd
" them by the death of your seducer,
" for which I am obliged this moment
" to leave my native country, perhaps
" for ever; — I have done what the ho-
nour

" nour of our family exacted from me;—
" it belongs to you to regulate your fu-
" ture conduct so as to atone, in some
" measure, for the errors of the past: —
" to enable you to do this, you ought
" to keep in eternal remembrance, that
" the follies of your fatal passion has not
" only brought the object of it to an un-
" timely grave, but also drove from all
" the social joys of life, into an irksome
" banishment in a foreign land, him who
" might have been happy, if he had
" not been

" Your brother,

" ADARIO.

Thinking, perhaps, he had been somewhat too severe in the above, he added this postscript by way of cordial:

" P. S. I shall constantly write to Mr.
" D——n, — he will be able to inform
" you how to direct for me; — you may
" be assured I shall receive with pleasure
" any letters that bring me an account
" of your welfare, and, in spite of all
" that has happen'd, to do you every
" service in my power."

After having sent this, by the groom who had first discover'd the place of her

abode, and given some necessary instructions to his other servants, he hurry'd away to meet the post-chaise, and I saw him no more.

As I had truly pity'd Isabinda, I could not forbear going to see in what manner she supported this last dreadful accident ; — on my entrance she was in bed, and surrounded by women and physicians ; — I gather'd from their discourse, that the surprise and grief she had been in had caused an abortion, accompany'd with fits of a very dangerous nature : — on my next visit, however, I found her youth and the strength of her constitution had got the better of her disease ; but though the pains of her body were removed, those of her mind still remain'd ; — she was extremely melancholy, — had a thorough contempt for the world, and the thoughts of a monastery were now so far from being shocking to her, that she resolved to fly to one, as the only asylum from censure and from care.

Accordingly, as I was afterwards inform'd, she went, on the re-establishment of her health, to Paris, and enter'd herself into the society of the Benedictine nuns, where I doubt not but she often sees her brother

brother through the grate, as he still continues to reside in that city.

I have now finish'd all the account I am able to give of this melancholy transaction, in which the justice of Providence seems to me to be distinguish'd in somewhat of a peculiar manner; and may serve as a warning to our gay amorous sparks, not to become the seducers of unwary innocence;—especially if they will be at the trouble of reflecting, how the perfidy and ingratitude of Flaminio, to the believing Harriot, was afterwards retorted on his own darling daughter.

C H A P. VI.

Gives the account of an occurrence, no less remarkable than it is entertaining; and shews that there is scarce any difficulty so great but that it may be got over, by the help of a ready wit and invention, if properly exerted.

TO make some attonement for my last melancholy recital, to those of my readers who may not care to have their heads fill'd with subjects of too serious

a nature, I shall now present them with one more likely to put in motion the risible muscles of the face, than to extort the falling of unwilling tears.

A gentleman, whom I shall call Conrade, had lived to the age of near seventy without ever testifying the least inclination to marriage ; — he had been a man of pleasure in his youth, and probably the too great success he then found among the fair had deterr'd him from entering into an honourable engagement with any of the sex ; — but there is no account for change of sentiment in this point, — an accident sometimes puts that into our heads which before we never thought of, or perhaps had an aversion to, — as it fell out in the case of the person I am speaking of.

A long friendship had subsisted between him and Murcio, a gentleman, who though not so far advanced in years, had made a better use of his time, — had been married, and was the father of three fine daughters, — two of whom had always lived with him ; but the youngest, after the death of his wife, was taken from him, and brought up under the care of an aunt in the country.

The eldest of these ladies being now about to be disposed of in marriage, Conrade received, and accepted an invitation to the wedding ;—Melanthe, sister to the bride, was a fine sparkling girl of nineteen ; — but whether it were that she appear'd in reality more lovely than usual at this time, or that the mirth and pleasantries common at such solemnities rekindled the long smother'd embers of amorous desire in the breast of Conrade, so it was, that he, who had been in the company of this beautiful maid without ever taking any notice of her charms, now, all at once, became extremely smitten with them,—insomuch that from this moment he resolved on acquainting her father with his new passion, and asking his consent to make his addresses to her ; which he did not at all despair of obtaining on the terms he intended to propose.

Murcio had a pretty country-house at a village about ten or twelve miles up the river, where he constantly went every Saturday, and staid till Monday or Tuesday, and sometimes longer ; — it was while he was in this retirement that Conrade chose to communicate to him the business he had in his head ; — accordingly he went thither, and found him entirely alone ; —

Melanthe having been prevented from going, as she was accustom'd to do, by a violent fit of the tooth-ach ;—this our old lover look'd upon as a good omen, being desirous to engage the father in favour of his passion, before he made any declaration of it to the daughter.

He began with saying, that he now repented having lived so long a bachelor ; — that having a very large estate, he should be glad of an heir of his own body to enjoy it ; — that if he could prevail on a young lady whom he liked to marry him, he would endeavour to atone for the want of youth by all the indulgencies in the power of a fond husband ; — and having thus prepared the way, told him, that if he thought proper to bestow his daughter Melanthe on him, he would desire no other fortune than her person ; yet would settle a dowry upon her superior to what might be expected if she brought him ten thousand pounds.

It is not to be imagined with what greediness Murcio swallow'd this proposal,—he did not even affect to hesitate, or make the least demur on accepting it ; on the contrary, he reply'd, that nothing could afford him a greater satisfaction than such an alliance, and that he doubted not

not but Melanthe would receive the honour he intended her as a woman who knew her own interest and happiness.

Both parties being equally transported, every thing was immediately agreed upon between them ; but Murcio not being able to assure himself that his daughter would so readily comply as he had made the lover hope she would, and fearing that if she should give the old gentleman a rebuff on his first onset, it might discourage him from making a second, and perhaps overturn the whole affair, resolved not to hazard the loss of so advantageous a match by leaving it to her own choice, sent a special messenger to her with a letter, the contents whereof are these :

To MELANTHE.

" DEAR CHILD,

" **M**Y worthy friend Conrade has taken a great liking to you, and will make you his wife on such terms as should but little prove the paternal affection I have for you to reject ; — be not you less thankful to heaven for so un hoped a blessing than I am ; nor, on any foolish pretences, either slight, or seem to

“ slight, the good presented to you.—If
“ you consider the vast advantages of
“ this match, a disparity of years can be
“ no objection: — I say thus much be-
“ cause I would convince your reason,
“ not enforce your action; for I should
“ be sorry to find myself obliged to
“ make use of the authority I have over
“ you in a thing which you ought, and I
“ hope will receive with the same satis-
“ faction I propose it: — know, how-
“ ever, that I have already agreed on
“ every thing for your marriage, — that
“ your future husband is now here, and
“ we shall both be in town either to-
“ morrow or the ensuing day: — I send
“ this on purpose to prepare you to be-
“ have towards him in a proper manner;
“ and as it is the absolute command of
“ him who is

“ Your affectionate father,

“ MURCIO.

I stood behind Melanthe's chair while she was reading this epistle, and never did I see a poor young creature in such terrible agitations; — scarce had she come to the end of the first period before she cry'd out, — His wife! — his wife! — what terms can the old lecher propose to compensate for the odious title of wife to such a wretch!

‘ a wretch !’—then going a little farther,
‘ Justly, indeed, said she, does my father
‘ suspect my obedience in this point ; —
‘ death itself would not be so dreadful to
‘ me as compliance.’—The more she pro-
ceeded, the higher her distraction grew.—
‘ What, fix’d my doom at once ! raved
she out ; at once resolve to cut me off
from all the joys of life, and condemn
me to everlasting misery ! — Is this a
parent’s love ! — oh ’tis most cruel, —
most unnatural !’

I know not to what extravagancies she might have been hurry’d, by the sudden rush of grief and despair, if tears now had not afforded their relief ; — but tho’ they a little soften’d the asperity of her passion, they had not the power to subdue it ; her tongue, indeed, ceas’d from exclaiming against her fate ; but the agonies of her countenance discover’d how much she inwardly regretted it.

While she was in this distressful and pity-moving situation, the gay, the lively Florimel came in ; — this young lady was the most beloved and intimate companion that Melanthe had ; — she saw her almost every day, and always enter’d without ceremony ; — she seem’d a little surprised at first sight to find her thus, but

but immediately recovering herself, approach'd her with her accustom'd sprightliness.

Florimel. ‘ Heyday, Melanthe,—what
‘ in the name of wonder makes you in-
‘ this pickle?—is your favourite squirrel
‘ dead? or has any accident happen'd to
‘ your last new peit-en-l'air? or what
‘ other misfortune of equal importance
‘ has befallen you?’

Melanthe. ‘ O Florimel!—what would
‘ I not give to be in thy condition?’

Florimel. ‘ My condition! — why
‘ what do you find to envy in my con-
‘ dition?’

Melanthe. ‘ To have no father to con-
‘ trole your actions by an unreasonable
‘ exertion of his authority.’

Florimel. ‘ Why truly, as you say,
‘ these old dads are troublesome enough
‘ sometimes;—yet, for all that, I should
‘ be heartily glad mine were alive again.
‘ — But pray what has yours done to
‘ make you wish yourself an orphan?’

Melanthe. ‘ Read that, and see if I
‘ have not cause.’

In speaking these words she pointed to her father's letter which lay open on the table; — Florimel took it up and read it as desir'd; — on examining the contents, she could not help looking a little grave; but having finish'd, resum'd the discourse with her former vivacity:

Florimel. ‘ As sure as I am alive both
‘ these old gentlemen are crack'd-brain'd,
‘ — the one in thinking of you for a
‘ wife, and the other in consenting to
‘ give you such a husband.’

Melanthe. ‘ One would, indeed, ima-
‘ gine they were not in their senses.’

Florimel. ‘ For my part, I am so
‘ astonish'd that I can scarce believe I am
‘ awake.—But what will you do?’

Melanthe. ‘ Nothing.’

Florimel. ‘ Nothing can come of no-
‘ thing, as king Lear says in the play.
‘ — I am less surpris'd, however at
‘ your stupidity in so perplexing a di-
‘ lemma, than I am at the folly of those
‘ who have involved you in it. — Bless
‘ me, what can either your lover or father
‘ propose to themselves by such a dispro-
‘ portionable

‘ portionable alliance, but horns on the
‘ one side, and disgrace to his family on
‘ the other.’

Melanthe. ‘ No, Florimel, it shall
‘ never come to that ; — I will rather
‘ work, or starve, or beg.’

Florimel. ‘ Look’ye, my dear, neither
‘ working nor starving, or begging, as I
‘ take it, will agree with your constitution ;
‘ — something else must be thought on.’

Melanthe. ‘ What else ?

Florimel. ‘ Do you think, that when your
‘ father comes to know what an impla-
‘ cable aversion you have to this match,
‘ he will not be prevail’d upon to recal
‘ the promise he has made to Conrade ?’

Melanthe. ‘ Impossible ; — I know his
‘ temper too well to flatter myself with
‘ such a hope : — you might as well
‘ think to blow St. Paul’s cathedral from
‘ its foundation with a single breath, as
‘ move him to recede from any thing he
‘ has once resolved.’

Florimel. ‘ Well then — suppose some
‘ way could be contrived to make Con-
‘ rade himself fly off ?’

Melanthe.

Melanthe. ‘ That would be a happy
‘ turn indeed ; — but, dear creature,
‘ how can it be brought about ? ’

Florimel. ‘ I have a project in my
‘ head that promises fair for it, if you
‘ will agree to join in the execution.’

Melanthe. ‘ You may be sure I shall.’

Florimel. ‘ It is this : — you must ad-
‘ mit a spruce young gallant to lie with
‘ you all night ; — Conrade must be in-
‘ form’d of the amour, in such a manner
‘ as to make him convinced of the truth
‘ of it ; and the duce is in him if after-
‘ wards he insists on marrying you.’

Melanthe. ‘ Fye, Florimel ; — how
‘ can you be so cruel to rally the misfor-
‘ tunes of your friend ? ’

Florimel. ‘ No, I protest I am as se-
‘ rious as a judge upon a criminal cause ;
‘ and would fain have you make the ex-
‘ periment I mention.

Melanthe. ‘ What, — would’st thou
‘ have me turn prostitute to avoid mar-
‘ riage ! ’

Florimel.

Florimel. ‘ No such matter ; — I will engage that the gallant I mean shall lie as harmless by your side as an infant.’

Melanthe. ‘ Prithee do not torture me with such riddles.

Florimel. ‘ I shall presently explain them ; — the gallant I am speaking of, and who is to be your bedfellow, is no other than my own individual self : — I shall put on a suit of my brother’s cloaths, and do not doubt but that when I am dress’d, and equipp’d in all my accoutrements, I shall be a figure handsome enough to make an old man jealous.

Melanthe. ‘ Sure never was so wild a scheme ; but yet I cannot conceive how it is to be conducted, or which way it can answer the end you propose by it.’

Florimel. ‘ Lord, — you are strangely dull, or affect to be so ; — but I will shew you what I shall write to Conrade, and that may help to enlighten your understanding.’

This witty lady waited not to hear what reply her friend would make, but ran

ran to a desk and immediately wrote the following lines :

To HUGH CONRADE, Esq;

" SIR,

" EVER since I heard of your intended marriage with Melanthe I have been divided in my thoughts, whether the treachery of betraying a secret entrusted to me, or by concealing it expose a gentleman of your character to the worst of mischiefs, would be the most dishonourable action :—the latter consideration has at last prevail'd ; and I think it my duty to inform you, that the lady you are about to make your wife has neither heart nor honour to bestow upon you, — both are already disposed of to a person she thinks more agreeable to her years : — not content with the many private assignations she has with him abroad, she frequently makes pretences, when her father goes into the country, to be left at home, where her chamber-maid, who is in the secret, admits this happy lover at midnight, and lets him out early in the morning, before the other servants of the house are stirring,—Murcio being gone to *****, I am well assured it will be in your power to convince " your-

“ yourself of the certainty of this intelligence, by sending any one on whom you can depend to watch about the door, either for the entrance or exit of the favourite gallant: — act as you please, however, — I have discharged the dictates of conscience in giving you this timely warning, and am,

“ SIR,

“ Your most humble, tho”
“ Nameless servant.”

This she gave Melanthe to read, and, as soon as she had done, was going to ask her how she approv'd of the contrivance, when the other prevented her by crying out,

Melanthe. ‘ Oh the wicked lying letter! — Dear Florimel, if this should be sent, and Conrade should shew it to my father, I believe he would kill me.’

Florimel. ‘ Tis possible he may not shew it; — but if he does, you have only to prepare yourself for a little scolding and swearing; — the worst he can do is to turn you out of doors; — and then, — to use your own words, it can be but working, starving, or begging.

Melanthe.

Melanthe. ‘ Oh, but my reputation,
‘ Florimel ! ’

Florimel. ‘ A fiddle of your reputa-
tion ; — would you hazard nothing to
avoid being tack’d, till death do you
part, to such a lump of decay’d mor-
tality as Conrade ? — besides, when the
affair is all over, and you are once got
free from this cursed engagement, it
will be easy, by unravelling the plot,
to clear your reputation and reconcile
you to your father into the bargain.’

Melanthe. ‘ Oh, Florimel, if I was
sure of that ! ’

Florimel. ‘ Trust to fortune ; — I will
lay my life, that if you behave accord-
ing to my directions, every thing will
go right.’

Melanthe. ‘ Well then,—tell me what
I am to do.’

Florimel. ‘ In the first place, when
your father comes home you must seem
to be as well pleased with the match as
he would have you be, and pretend
that you are mightily in love with Con-
rade’s estate, whatever you are with the
man ;

‘ man ; — then, as for the old wretch himself, you have nothing to do but to simper and look silly when he makes his addresses, and tell him that you are all obedience to your father’s will.’

Melanthe. ‘ This is a hard task, and I am a very ill dissembler ; — I will try, however, what I can do : — but Florimel, — there is one thing that neither you nor I as yet have thought upon ; — suppose Conrade should take it into his head to watch the door himself, and draw upon you in his passion ?’

Florimel. ‘ What if he does, — I shall have a sword as well as he.’

Melanthe. ‘ But not understand so well how to use it ?’

Florimel. ‘ I don’t know that ; — but if I can’t fight as well, I am sure I can run much better ; — so pray do not be under any concern on my account.’

These fair friends parted not till the night was pretty far advanced ; all which time was taken up with settling some farther particulars in relation to their design. — Molly, the waiting-maid, was call’d in, and, after a vow of secrecy, intrusted

trusted with the whole affair ;—she seem'd a good smart girl, highly proper for the businesf she was to be employ'd in, and readily promised her assistance.

As I was very near as impatient as themselves for the success of this whimsical enterprize, I went every day to Murcio's house, and found that Melanthe acted the part she had been taught by Florimel so as to give the utmost satisfaction both to her father and lover ;—who now talk'd of nothing but to have the wedding solemniz'd as soon as the necessary preparations for it could be made.

Saturday being arrived, I made it my business to enquire whether Murcio was gone, as usual, to his country seat, and finding he was so, and that Melanthe staid at home, concluded that this was the day on which the first wheel of the machine was to be put in motion, therefore hurried away to the house of Conrade, were I luckily came time enough to see him receive the letter from Florimel.

The wrinkles of this old gentleman's face were greatly agitated while he was reading this epistle : — at first his eye-lids extend-ed themselves, and his brows were elated with

with surprise,—then were contracted into a frown of anger;—sometimes a sneer of contempt and disbelief lengthen'd the furrows round his wither'd lips; but the attitude of longest duration, was a pensive hanging down of his head, accompany'd with counting the hairs upon his little finger, out of which at last he started, and cry'd to himself, — ‘ Many reasons may be urged both for and against my giving credit to this story;—but whether built upon truth or malice, I have no need to be at the pains of considering, — the author has pointed out the means of being convinced, and I will take his counsel.’

As I could not be certain that he would continue in this resolution, and much less so, that if he did what the event of it would be, I went by break of day the next morning and posted myself over-against Murcio's house;—in a few minutes after, Conrade came, wrap'd in a cloak, but stood more aloof, yet near enough to see every thing that pass'd; — we had not waited above a quater of an hour, before the door we watch'd was softly open'd, and a well-dress'd beau rush'd out; — Conrade advanced as fast as his gout would let him, in order, I suppose, to see the face of this invader of his hoped for

for happiness ; but the pretended gallant was too nimble for his pursuit ; — but dropt a piece of paper, as if by accident flirted out with his handkerchief ; — Conrade immediatly snatched it up, and found it was a billet ; — the superscription seem'd to have been tore off, but the contents were these :

“ Dearest of your sex,
“ **M**Y father is gone into the country,
“ and I have made an excuse to be
“ left behind ;—come at the usual hour,
“ and Molly will admit you to the
“ arms of

“ Yours.”

I easily perceived that this was a second plot of the young ladies to corroborate the first ; and it had all the effect they could wish, and was also productive of something else, which neither of them at that time imagined ; as will appear in the succeeding chapter,



C H A P. VII.

Is a continuance of this merry history, which presents something as little expected by the reader as it was by the parties concern'd in it ; and, if the author's hopes do not greatly deceive him, will also afford an equal share of satisfaction as surprise.

IT is not to be doubted but that Conrade, after having received this double confirmation of Melanthe's transgression, gave over all intentions of becoming her husband ; — yet, by what I could gather from his looks, and some expressions he let fall, the manner in which he should quit his pretensions was the occasion of a very great conflict in his mind : — he was a good-natured man, and loth to accuse this young lady to her father ; — yet, to break off a match so far advanced, and which he had so earnestly solicited, without assigning any cause for the change of his resolution, he thought would not only make him appear ridiculous, but also put a final period to all conversation between him and his old friend ; and he probably

probably continued undetermined in this matter till he found himself obliged to talk upon it to Murcio himself, who had appointed to come to town the next day, in order to sign the marriage-writings.

That gentleman was at home, and having expected him some hours before he came, began, in a pleasant manner, to reproach his tardiness; to which Conrade reply'd very gravely, — ‘ I am, indeed, sir, somewhat beyond my time, yet, I believe, soon enough for the business which now brings me.’ — Murcio seem'd very much surprised on hearing him speak in this manner; and poor Melanthe, who was present, well knowing that this alteration in her lover's behaviour was the effect of the plot concerted between her and Florimel, trembled for the event, and was no less shock'd at the thoughts how much her innocence suffer'd in his opinion.

It is uncertain what return Murcio would have made, for the other prevented him from speaking by adding to what he had said before, — that he had something of a very extraordinary nature, and which required no witnesses, to communicate to him; on which he made a sign to Melanthe to leave the room, and she was no

sooner withdrawn than Conrade proceeded, tho' not without a good deal of hesitation, to declare himself in these terms :

Conrade. ‘ Dear, Murcio, we have
‘ long been friends, and I should be
‘ heartily sorry that what I have to say
‘ should occasion a rupture between us ;
‘ — for my own part, there is no man
‘ living for whom I shall always preserve
‘ a greater esteem than for yourself.’

Murcio. ‘ I cannot think, sir, that
‘ you have any thing in your mind should
‘ give me reason to regard you less.’

Conrade. ‘ Reason is too frequently
‘ misled by passion,—I know it by expe-
‘ rience, and shall be glad to find yours
‘ is more strong ;—tho’ I confess I have
‘ been to blame, and am sorry things
‘ have gone so far : — but, sir, I have
‘ consider’d that it is now too late in life
‘ for me to think of marriage, especially
‘ with so young a lady as Melanthe.’

Murcio. ‘ This is an odd turn, indeed ;
‘ — methinks, sir, you should have con-
‘ sider’d this before you made any pro-
‘ posals of that sort, either to me or my
‘ daughter. — A treaty of marriage, sir,
‘ when

‘ when concluded on and consented to by both parties, is a thing of too much consequence to be broke off by either, without putting the most gross affront upon the other.’

Conrade. ‘ Not, sir, when it can be proved that the consummation would be equally inconvenient for both.’

Murcio. ‘ As how for both? — my daughter has never made the least objection.’

Conrade. ‘ It may be so; — yet I am well assured she neither does nor ever can regard me with that affection which alone could make either me or herself happy in being united.’

Murcio. ‘ A mere whim; — a caprice of your own, founded only on the disparity of years; and I am amazed you should think of flying off from your engagement on so shallow a pretence.’

Conrade. ‘ Perhaps I may have others: — suppose I know she loves another?’

Murcio. ‘ Sir, I will suppose no such thing; — she love another! — no, sir, she has been bred up in principles too

‘ virtuous and too modest, to place her affections on any one, till my commands and the authority of the church make it her duty to do so ; and I must tell you, sir, it is base in you to add to the ill usage you are about to give her by traducing her reputation.’

Conrade. ‘ I scorn the unmanly thought :—be assured I have proofs of what I say.’

Murcio, ‘ Produce them then.’

Conrade. ‘ I will, since I find the justification of my own honour depends upon it.—There, sir,—read that, and be convinced.’

In speaking this he gave Murcio the letter that had been sent by Florimel, which the other, after having carelessly perused, threw from him, and looking on Conrade with the utmost scorn, said to him,

Murcio. ‘ A notable proof, indeed,—there are few people without some enemies ; — but this is a piece of scandal too gross, too stupid, and the invention too ill concerted to pass even on the most weak and credulous mind ; and

• and seems rather a poor low contri-
• vance of your own, to evade fulfil-
• ing an engagement you have taken it
• into your head to repent of.

Conrade. ‘ You are free in your ex-
‘ pressions, sir, but I believe it will pre-
‘ fently be my turn to retort that con-
‘ tempt you so unjustly treat me with.—
‘ Do you know the hand-writing of
‘ your daughter?’

Murcio. ‘ Yes, certainly I do.’

Conrade. ‘ Then judge of the con-
‘ tents of this, and take shame to your-
‘ self for the injurious treatment you have
‘ given me.’

The reader will easily imagine, that it was Melanthe’s little billet he now put into his hands; but no one can conceive, much less am I able to describe the rage, the horror, the distraction, that shook the whole frame of this astonish’d parent, on finding himself no longer able to refuse giving credit to so terrible a misfortune. — ‘ Death and furies! cry’d ‘ he, infamous, abandon’d wretch!’ — Then, after loading her with all the foulest names that language could afford, he turn’d to Conrade, — ‘ Pardon

' me, dear Conrade, said he ; had an
' angel told me what you did, without
' this cursed testimony, I should not
' have believed the story ; — but you
' shall have ample satisfaction ; I'll turn
' this scandal to my family, — this de-
ceiver both of you and me, out of my
doors this moment ; — never own her,
— never see her more, but leave her to
the miseries she merits.'

He was running out of the room, and 'tis probable, in the first emotions of his passion, would have done as he had threaten'd, if Conrade had not withheld him ; and partly by force, and partly by persuasion, made him sit down while he reason'd with him in this manner :

Conrade. ' Dear Murcio, compose
yourself, and be not rashly guilty of a
thing you hereafter may repent of ; —
consider that the errors of one branch
of a family reflect dishonour on the
whole ; — you have other daughters,
who, tho' pure as innocence itself, yet,
being of the same blood, may be sus-
pected liable to the same faults ; — for
their sakes, therefore, rather smother
than expose the crime of this fair
offender.

Murcio.

Murcio. ‘ What ! — would you then
‘ have me to forgive, encourage, and
‘ suffer her to continue in this shameful
‘ prostitution under my own roof !

Conrade. ‘ No ; — but I would have
‘ you remember that she is still your
‘ child, and that it is your duty, as a
‘ father, to use your utmost efforts to re-
‘ trieve her from perdition, not sink her
‘ deeper into it.

Murcio, ‘ As how retrive her ! — is she
‘ not already lost, — irrecoverably lost to
‘ reputation as well as virtue !’

Conrade. ‘ Not so, I hope ; — all yet
‘ may be well, if her seducer can be pre-
‘ vail’d upon to repair the injury he has
‘ done her by an honourable marriage.’

Murcio. ‘ A vain expectation.’

Conrade. ‘ ’Tis worth attempting, at
‘ least ; — but first you must oblige her to
‘ discover the name of this too happy
‘ man ; for you see, that either by de-
‘ sign or accident, the direction to him
‘ is torn off the letter.’

Murcio. ‘ I protest, in the distraction
‘ of my thoughts, I had forgot that cir-

' cumstance ; and also to ask you by
' what means this infamous scrawl came
' into your possession.'

On this Conrade related to him all the particulars he had observed while he had been watching his rival's coming out of the house ; and when he had done, in order to encourage Murcio to take the advice he had just given to him, added this description of the supposed gallant : -

Conrade, ' I was very much vex'd that
' I had not an opportunity of seeing his
' face ; but his back being towards me,
' and, besides, having the advantage of
' some twenty paces before me, I in vain
' endeavour'd to overtake him, but I
' took great notice of his dress and air,
' and do assure you he has all the ap-
' pearance of a man of fashion, and such
' a one as to whom you could not reason-
' ably have refused your daughter, even
' if this accident had never happen'd.'

Murcio. ' He should have ask'd her of
' me then ; — but I will call her down,
' and hear what she has to say.—No,—I
' cannot,—will not see her ;—I know not
' whether the sight of her might not pro-
' voke me to some desperate action.'

Conrade.

Conrade. ‘ I think it is best you should
‘ refrain seeing her, ’till you are more
‘ the master of your passion ;—but as the
‘ affair we have been speaking of admits
‘ of no delay, — suppose you write to
‘ her.’

Murcio. ‘ The advice is good.—Oh,
‘ what a curse it is to have a disobedient
‘ child !’

He appear’d in the most bitter anguish
of mind while uttering these last words ;
but, having recover’d himself a little,
took pen, ink, and paper, and wrote the
following lines :

To MELANTHE.

“ Thou scandal to my blood and name,
“ THAT you still live to receive this,
“ I thank the gentleman whom you
“ would have wrong’d by carrying pol-
“ lution to his bed ; — he has obtain’d
“ a reprieve for you on this condition,—
“ that you declare the name and quality
“ of your undoer, to the end that I may
“ take such measures as I shall judge
“ proper, to oblige him to do justice to
“ the honour of a family of which you
“ are the only blemish. — Think not to

“ deny your crime,—I have the infamous
 “ witness of it under your own hand ;
 “ but be plain and open in your con-
 “ fession, if you hope ever to obtain
 “ mercy either from heaven or

“ Your offended father,

“ MURCIO.

After having shew'd this to Conrade; he call'd for the waiting maid, and with a stern voice and countenance, bid her give that letter to her mistress, and bring him an immediate answer : — I follow'd; and saw with what agonies poor Melanthe read this cruel mandate ; — between the fears of what her father's indignation might inflict upon her, and the shame of appearing guilty of a crime her soul disdain'd, she was so much overwhelm'd, that for some minutes she had not power to speak ; and when she did, it was only to utter this exclamation :

Melanthe. ‘ What will become of me !
 ‘ — oh this vile plot of Florimel's ! ’

Molly. ‘ Lord, madam, do not put
 ‘ yourself into this flurry ; — you know
 ‘ your father's temper well enough, and
 ‘ could not expect he would be less se-
 ‘ vere ; — but it will be all over in time,
 ‘ and

‘ and you must resolve to bear it for a
while.’

Melanthe. ‘ I cannot, — will not bear
it ; — I will go down this instant and
disclose all, and clear my innocence ! ’

Molly. ‘ Sure, madam, you would not
be so mad. — What would you undo
all so much pains has been taken to
bring about, and be forced to marry
Conrade at last ? ’

Melanthe. ‘ Was there ever so terrible
a dilemma ! — what answer can I give
to my father ! ’

Molly. ‘ Dear, madam, say any thing ;
— tell him you are in love with the
man in the moon, — the Great Mogul,
— say any thing but the truth.’

Melanthe. ‘ How silly am I to ask
advice of such a giddy creature ! — but
I will try what I can do.’

With this she turn’d herself towards a
table whereon stood a standish, — sat
down, — paused a while, then began to
write ; but had scarce finish’d two lines
before she left off, — tore the paper ; —
mused again, and then began afresh ; —
the

the second essay met with the same fate as the former, and so did several succeeding ones, till at last she threw the pen out of her hand, — started up and said,

Melanthe. ‘ ’Tis in vain to attempt it, — I cannot write; — can find nothing to say that will abate my father’s rage.’

Molly. ‘ Why then, madam, say nothing,—e’en let him think as he pleases at present; — if you will but pluck up a spirit we shall do well enough; — he will not kill you for his own sake; and as for any thing else you must content yourself to submit to it; — nothing can be so bad as marrying Conrade.—I will go to Florimel presently; if I am so lucky as to find her at home, ’tis ten to one but she puts something into our heads.’

Melanthe. ‘ Do so; — I wish she were here.’

While they were speaking Murcio call’d very loud at the bottom of the stairs for Molly to come down, on which she said:

Molly.

Molly. ‘ Do you hear, madam ;—but
‘ I must face the storm for fear it should
‘ come hither and terrify you worse.—
‘ I wish you had as much courage as I
‘ have.’

She said no more, but ran hastily down into the parlour, where I with no less speed attended her foot-steps, quite impatient to hear how the pert baggage would behave.

Murcio. ‘ What is the reason, minx,
‘ that I have no answer to the letter you
‘ carry’d up ?

Molly. ‘ Lord, sir, there were some-
‘ what or other in that letter that has
‘ frightened my poor lady almost out of her
‘ wits ; — she does nothing but cry and
‘ wring her hands,—it would make your
‘ heart ake to see her.—She write an an-
‘ swer ! — no indeed, — she is not in a
‘ condition to give an answer.’

Murcio. ‘ If she can’t you must, hussey.
‘ — Who was that fellow you let out of
‘ my house yesterday morning ?’

‘ *Molly.* ‘ I, sir,—I let out no fellow,
‘ not I.’

Murcio.

Murcio. ‘ Tis false ; — my friend here,
‘ happening to pass through the street
‘ at that time, saw him come out.’

Molly. ‘ Why then, sir, your friend is
‘ no better than a pickthank for bringing
‘ you such idle stories ; and I am not
‘ afraid to tell him so to his face. — I
‘ say again, I let out no fellow.’

Murcio. ‘ Was there ever such impu-
‘ dence !’

Conrade, ‘ Come, come, mrs. Molly,
‘ you had better confess the truth, — it
‘ will be for the good of your lady, and
‘ yourself too.’

Molly. ‘ Sir, I shall not tell a lye for
‘ the matter ; — I let out no fellow ; —
‘ there was a fine gentleman, indeed,
‘ that sat up all night playing at cards
‘ with my lady, that I let out ; — but
‘ no fellow I assure you.’

Murcio, ‘ Well, — and pray mrs. bra-
‘ zenface, what is the name of this fine
‘ gentleman ?’

Molly. ‘ Lord, sir, do you think I
‘ know the names of all the gentlemen
‘ that

‘ that come to visit my lady ? — indeed
‘ I am not so impertinent as to ask.’

Murcio. ‘ No equivocation ; — tell me
‘ this moment or I shall be your death.’

Molly. ‘ Bless me, sir, — how can you
‘ fright a body so for nothing ! — but if
‘ you would be my death twenty times
‘ over I can say no more than I have
‘ done.’

Conrade. ‘ Dear Murcio, this girl is
‘ not worth the passion you are in ; — I
‘ hope the young lady herself will satisfy
‘ you, when once she considers how
‘ much it is her interest to do so.’

Murcio. ‘ Not while she has such a
‘ harden’d wretch to encourage her obsti-
‘ nancy. — Hussey, pack up all your
‘ trumpery, and get out of my house di-
‘ rectly, or I shall provide a place for
‘ you in Bridewell.’

Molly. ‘ Oh, dear sir, I shall not give
‘ you that trouble ; — there are places
‘ enough to be had without your pro-
‘ viding.’

After she had left the room, and Mur-
cio had vented his passion in two or three
hearty

hearty curses, he turn'd to Conrade, and, with a tone of voice which express'd the deepest trouble of mind, utter'd these words :

Murcio. ‘ You see, my dear friend, that both mistress and maid are alike incorrigible. — What now remains for me to do, either to preserve my family from disgrace, or this degenerate girl from everlasting ruin ? ’

The other, who doubtless condemn'd Melanthe more in his heart than he would let her father know he did, could find nothing to say in her defence ; but that he hoped, when the first confusion of this discovery was a little over, she would be brought to reason ; and therefore intreated he would allow her some small time to recollect herself.

As the conversation now began to consist only of railings on the one side, and persuasions to moderation on the other, I easily perceived that nothing of importance would be the result, so resolved to leave the two old gentlemen together, and accordingly laid hold of the first opportunity to get out of the house.

C H A P. VIII.

Presents something as little expected by the reader as it was by the parties concern'd in it ; and, if the author's hopes do not deceive him, will also afford an equal share of satisfaction as surprise.

BEING very anxious for the situation of poor Melanthe, I fully design'd to make another visit to Murcio's house early the next morning ; but I had no sooner got my Tablets clear'd of the impression made on them the preceding day, than some company coming in detain'd me at home till the hour in which I usually dined, and then being told the table was spread, I sat down ; but made a very short repast, being always more eager to gratify the cravings of my mind than my sensual appetite.

I came to Murcio's door when Conrade had just alighted from his coach and was stepping in, so I had an easy access, and follow'd him up into the dining-room, where Murcio was then sitting, and express'd

press'd the satisfaction he took in seeing him in words to this effect :

Murcio. ‘ My dear friend, I am glad you are come to give me your opinion in a thing I am about to do :—my ungracious daughter has given me no answer, — made me no submissions ;— I cannot suffer her in my house ; and, if I turn her out of it, am in danger of having my whole family scandalized by her behaviour ; — I am therefore resolved to send her down to the farthest part of Cornwall, where I have a near kinsman ; — I was going to write to him on that occasion when I heard you were here.’

Conrade. ‘ I flatter myself, sir, that the intelligence I bring will save you that trouble, and the young lady so long a journey : — I have discover'd her favourite lover.’

Murcio. ‘ Is it possible !—for heaven's sake who,—what is he ?’

Conrade. ‘ One you little suspect, tho' I have seen him often here ; — tis D-

riman.’

Murcio.

Murcio. ‘ Doriman ! — yes, since his return from his travels he visits here sometimes ; — his sister, Florimel, and Melanthe were brought up together at the boarding-school, and since they left it have scarce been two days a-funder : — but I cannot think Dorimon has been her seducer : — she is neither above his hopes nor below his expectations : — if he had any inclinations towards her, I know of nothing should hinder him from making his honourable addresses. — But what grounds have you for such a supposition ?’

Conrade. ‘ You shall hear : — you know I told you that I did not see the face of the gentleman that came out of your house on Sunday morning ; but as I follow’d him a good part of the street I took notice of his habit, which, indeed, had somewhat particular in it, and would have attracted my observation had I seen it on any other person ; — it was a dark olive colour’d French barragon, laced with a very rich Point d’Espagne down the seams ; — he had also a fine flaxen wig, with a bag and solitair of an uncommon dimension ; — I then took him either for a foreigner, or one lately come from abroad ; — in

‘ the

the same dress, and as exactly as I saw him then, did I see him within this half hour at the chocolate-house : — I cannot, indeed, swear to the man, but I think may safely do so as to the cloaths; especially as I heard himself say, on some gentleman's praising the suit, and telling him they believed there was not such another in England, that he was pretty sure there was not ; for he had bespoke it at Paris, according to his own taste, and it had not been come over long enough for any one to take a pattern by it.

Murcio. ‘ I must own that there is a strong probability in what you say ; but yet, without a certainty, know not what measures I can pursue.’

Conrade. ‘ If you will take my advice, — send for him ; — I heard him say he should dine at home, — so is scarce gone out ; — give some distant hints, at first, concerning a marriage with your daughter ; and, according to the answers he makes, you will be instructed how to proceed.’

Murcio. ‘ It shall be so ; — I will not let him see I have any suspicion of my daughter’s fault ; — and, whether there

‘ be

' be any thing between them or not, a
' proposal of the nature you mention can-
' not seem strange to him, as our families
' have always lived together in a perfect
' harmony and good understanding.'

He had no sooner said this than he call'd a servant and sent him with his compliments to Dorimon, and to let him know he desired to speak with him immediately, if not otherwise engaged.

After this the two friends had some farther discourse, concerning what steps the father of Melanthe should take in this affair; when the fellow, who had been sent on the above message, return'd and told his master, that Dorimon said he would not fail doing himself the honour of obeying his commands in a few minutes; on which Conrade took his leave, and Murcio sat down, endeavouring to frame his temper and countenance so as to be suitable to the business he had in hand.

Dorimon appear'd in a short time, and the first compliments being past, Murcio began to open what he had to say, by telling him that he had a great regard for his family;—that he was a fine young gentleman; and that being now five and twenty,

twenty, he much wonder'd that he had not heard of his addressing some lady on the score of marriage ; — to which Dorimon reply'd, that marriage was a thing he had not as yet much thought upon ; and that having a sister who took care of the affairs of his houshold, a wife was the less necessary to him. — Murcio then demanded, if he found any averseness in himself to changing his condition in favour of a woman of equal birth and fortune, and who would approve of his pretensions. — Dorimon seem'd a little surprised at these interrogatories ; but answer'd in the negative, with this proviso, that the person of the lady were equally agreeable. — Murcio, thinking this reply a proper cue for explaining himself, did so in the following manner :

Murcio. ‘ What think you then of my daughter Melanthe ? ’

Dorimon. ‘ As of an angel, sir, above my hopes.’

Murcio. ‘ No fine speeches, Dorimon ; — deal sincerely with me. — Do you like her well enough to marry her ? ’

Dorimon.

Dorimon. ‘ Yes, sir, upon my soul ;—
‘ and should bless the hand that gave
‘ her to me.’

Murcio. ‘ Sir, I take you at your
‘ word, and give you mine that you shall
‘ have her, and six thousand pounds, if
‘ you think that a sufficient dower.’

Dorimon. ‘ I do, sir, and though Melanthe is a sufficient fortune of herself, shall accept your offer as a father’s blessing, and make a settlement accordingly.’

Murcio. ‘ Then there remains no more than to get the marriage-articles drawn up, which, if you please, shall be to-morrow morning.’

Dorimon. ‘ It cannot be too soon. — But, sir, may I not have leave to see the lovely Melanthe, — to throw myself at her feet, and be assur’d she will not regret the happiness you bestow upon me ?’

Murcio. ‘ Oh, sir, you have nothing to apprehend on that account ; for, to be plain with you, I design’d her for another ; — she rejected the proposal,

‘ for which she has been under some disgrace with me ; but as I have since discover’d her disobedience was occasion’d by the affection she has for you, I was the more easily induced to pardon it :—she does not yet know that I consent to gratify her inclinations ; but you shall have the pleasure of telling her yourself.’

He then went to the door and order’d a servant to bid Melanthe come down ; after which he turn’d back and said to Dorimon,

Murcio. ‘ My daughter will wait on you presently ; I know you will excuse my leaving you together,—I have business calls me abroad ; but expect to see you to-morrow morning, and shall have a lawyer here.’

Dorimon. ‘ You may be certain, sir, I shall not fail.’

The other said no more, but went hastily away to avoid seeing his daughter ;—he had not left the room above half a minute before Melanthe enter’d, but with a confusion impossible to be expres’d ;—she had expected no other, on being call’d down, than to meet some terrible effects

of her father's displeasure ; — her eyes, yet red with tears, were now cast down upon the floor, as she advanced with slow and trembling steps ; — nor saw she who was there, till Dormion sprung forward, and took her by the hand with these words :

Dorimon. ‘ Charming Melanthe, how am I transported at the goodness of your father ! — how incapable of expressing my gratitude for the permission he has just now given me of telling you how much, how truly I adore you ! ’

Melanthe. ‘ Bless me, Dorimon, what is the meaning of all this ! — Where is my father ? ’

Dorimon. ‘ Gone, to give me the happy opportunity of endeavouring to inspire you with sentiments in favour of my passion, and conformable to his will.’

Melanthe. ‘ Your passion, and his will ! — Certainly, Dorimon, you must either be mad, or I not in my senses. — For heaven’s sake explain this mystery ! ’

He was going to reply when his sister Florimel came tripping in,—that young lady having been inform'd by Molly of all that had pass'd at Murcio's house, was extremely impatient to know how her fair friend behaved afterwards on that occasion; — Melanthe no sooner saw her than she flew into her arms, and cry'd,

Melanthe. ‘ My dear, dear Florimel, what would I not have given to have seen you last night ! ’

Florimel. ‘ I was no less eager to be with you; — but I find that things have quite chang'd their face since then; — I met your father at the door as I enter'd; — the old gentleman seems to be in quite good humour, desir'd me to walk up, and told me I should find you and my brother together.’

Dorimon. ‘ Ay, my dear sister, we are together, and I hope shall soon be joined to separate no more.’

Florimel. ‘ Separate no more ! as how !

Dorimon. ‘ By the solemn and indissoluble ties of marriage; — Murcio, the

‘ the generous Murcio, has bestowed her
‘ on me.’

Florimel. ‘ What, is it agreed upon?’

Dorimon. ‘ Absolutely ; — to-morrow
‘ the articles are to be drawn between us,
‘ and there will then be nothing wanting
‘ but my angel’s consent for the con-
‘ summation of my bliss.

Florimel. ‘ And was this the business
‘ on which he sent for you in such haste?’

Dorimon. ‘ The same.’

Here Florimel burst into so violent a fit of laughter as render’d her unable to speak for some time ; — in vain Dorimon asked several times over the cause of this extravagant mirth ; and it was but by degrees she recovered herself enough to make this reply :

Florimel. ‘ I have found out the riddle ;
‘ — it was I, brother, that have made
‘ this match.’

Dorimon. ‘ You !’

Florimel. ‘ Yes, with the assistance of
‘ that suit of cloaths you have on.’

Then, addressing herself to Melanthe, proceeded thus :

Florimel. ‘ You must know, my dear, that it was Conrade himself that watch’d me coming out of your house, — I saw him stand perdu under sir Thomas *****’s porch ; — he has certainly seen my brother in these cloaths, and, mistaking him for me, has pass’d him upon your father for your supposed gallant.’’

Melanthe. ‘ It must be so, indeed ; — there is no other way of accounting for this odd event.’’

Dorimon was now as much confounded in his turn, as the two ladies had been in theirs, till his sister, having first obtain’d Melanthe’s leave, related to him the whole history of their contrivance to break the match with Conrade ; — this repetition occasion’d some pleasantry between the brother and the sister ; but Melanthe was too much ashame’d to bear any great part in it ; — her new lover, observing her seriousness, spoke in this manner :

Dorimon. ‘ I have got nothing, Florimel, by the account you have given, but

‘ but the mortification of that vanity
‘ Murcio had inspired me with ; and
‘ dare not now flatter myself that Me-
‘ lanthe will so readily, as I once hoped,
‘ acquiesce in the agreement made be-
‘ tween us.’

Florimel. ‘ If she does not all will
‘ come out ; and if so, Murcio will cer-
‘ tainly return to his first engagement to
‘ give her to Conrade. — What say you,
‘ Melanthe, have you aversion enough
‘ for my brother to run so great a risque ?’

This demand made Melanthe blush excessively ; — she paused, — hung down her head ; but at last made this return :

Melanthe. ‘ So sudden a change in
‘ my fortune, might well excuse me from
‘ giving a direct answer to such a que-
‘ stion : — of this, however, you may be
‘ assur’d that I have not courage to dis-
‘ obey my father a second time, and that
‘ I love the sister too well to have any
‘ aversion to the brother.’

On this Dorimon kiss’d her hand with a great deal of warmth, and said many tender and passionate things to her, which, as the reader will easily conceive, I think it needless to repeat ; and shall only add,

that between the brother and the sister Melanthe was at last prevail'd upon to confess, — that it would be without the least reluctance she should obey her father in the choice he had now made for her.

Tho' there now was little cause to apprehend any disappointment in these nuptials, yet I resolved to see the thing fully concluded on; accordingly I went the next morning to Murcio's house, where I found him very busy with his lawyer; — Dorimon came in soon after, and the writings were presently fill'd up, sign'd, seal'd, and duly executed by both parties: — the lawyer staid no longer than to receive his fees, and he had no sooner left the room, than Murcio spoke to Dorimon in these terms:

Murcio. ‘ Well, Dorimon, I think
‘ there is nothing now wanting for the
‘ making you my son, except the cere-
‘ mony of the church; and I did not
‘ care how soon that also was perform'd;
‘ —I do not love to see affairs of this na-
‘ ture kept long in hand; — besides, you
‘ must know, that on my daughter's re-
‘ fusing to marry the person I first pro-
‘ posed to her, I swore in my passion
‘ that I would never see her face again
‘ till she was a wife.’

Dorimon.

Dorimon. ‘ You may be assured, sir,
‘ I shall think every moment an age till
‘ I can prevail upon the lovely Melanthe
‘ to take that name; and I do not doubt
‘ but her knowledge of the vow you have
‘ made will very much expedite my
‘ wishes.’

Murcio. ‘ I am going directly to my
‘ little country seat, and shall leave you to
‘ consult with her about the day; but
‘ will write to the rector of *****, who is
‘ my kinsman, and desire he will perform
‘ the office of tacking you together; —
‘ when that is over, would have you both
‘ come down to *****, where you may
‘ depend on meeting with a fatherly re-
‘ ception.’

Nothing farther of any consequence was said by either of them, — Murcio took coach for the country, and Dorimon went to the apartment of his mistress, where strenuously pressing her for the speedy consummation of his happiness, her father’s pretended vow serv’d as an excuse for her compliance, and she consented that the wedding should be solemnized on the next Sunday after.

No accident retarded the fulfilling this agreement, and they were married on the day appointed, by the reverend gentleman recommended by Murcio; after which they set out, accompany'd by Florimel, for *****, in order to receive the blessing he had promised to bestow upon them.

As no one of this company had any reason to be discontented at what had happen'd, it is not to be doubted but the goddess of chearfulness accompany'd them in their little journey ;—I say journey, because the sister of Dorimon having an aversion to the water, especially in rough weather, as it was that day, they went in a landau, in complaisance to her ; but the subject of their conversation is not in my power to relate, as I had no opportunity of being witness of it.



C H A P. IX.

Contains a succinct account of some farther particulars, in some measure relative to the foregoing adventure, and, besides, are of too agreeable and interesting a nature in themselves not to be look'd upon as a rightly judged, and very necessary appendix.

HAVING married my two new made lovers, the reader will possibly imagine, that the last act of the play is ended, and that I should now drop the curtain, to prepare for some fresh subject of entertainment; — but he must wait awhile,—I have not yet done with any of my characters; and besides, that there are many things which seem to require a farther explanation, I cannot think of parting with my favourite Florimel without giving her those praises which her wit and good humour may justly claim.

It is not unlikely, indeed, but that there may be some over scrupulous ladies in the world who will be so far from approving the character of this charming

girl, that they will highly contemn her for assuming the air and habit of a man, tho' for never so short a space of time; and even rail at Melanthe for consenting to put in execution the stratagem she had contrived for her deliverance from an evil so justly dreaded by her; — such as these will certainly think I have said enough, if not too much on the occasion, and perhaps throw aside the book, and cry they will read no farther: — well, — be it so, — the loss will be entirely their own, — I am pretty confident neither my reputation, nor the profits of my publisher, will suffer by their ill-nature in this point.

It is for the entertainment of the gay, the witty, and the truly virtuous, who, by the way, are never censorious, that these lucubrations are chiefly intended; and if I am so fortunate as to please them, should give myself no great pain what may be said of me by those of the abovemention'd class.

In defiance, therefore, of these fair, or rather unfair critics, I shall proceed in what I have farther to relate concerning the principal subjects of this narrative.

On their arrival at **** they were received by Murcio with a shew of the greatest

greatest satisfaction, yet I, who took care to be there before them, in order to be witness of what should pass at this first interview, could easily perceive that he embraced his son-in-law with more cordiality and less constraint than he did his daughter ;—the remembrance of her supposed fault it was that doubtless render'd him unable to treat her with his accustom'd tenderness ;—he scarce touch'd her cheek in saluting her, and when he gave her his blessing added, — ‘ Pray ‘ heaven your future conduct may de-‘ serve it.’

It could not be otherwise, but that all the company must comprehend the full meaning of these words ; but poor Melanthe was so much affected by them, that she burst into a flood of tears, and throwing herself a second time at her father's feet, address'd him in these pathetic terms :

Melanthe. ‘ Oh, sir,—I beg,—I beseech you, by all the love you once had for me, to forgive the only act of disobedience I was ever guilty of ;—par-
don but the aversion I had to the match you first proposed to me, and you will easily absolve the rest.’

Dorimon. ‘ Yes, sir,—my dear,—my charming wife, is as innocent of every thing that can deserve your blame, as I am from even the most distant wish of violating her purity or dishonouring your family.’

Florimel. ‘ Ay, ay, — it is poor me that am alone in fault ; but since the mischief I have done has been productive of so much good, I scarce doubt of being excused by a gentleman of so much good sense as Murcio. — I have deliver’d your daughter, sir, by my contrivance, from the horrors of a forced marriage ;—I have procur’d a wife for my brother, with whom, if he is not the most happy, I am certain he deserves to be the most miserable of all mankind ; and I have got you a son-in-law who I hope will merit that honour by his future behaviour.’

Murcio, who could not form even the most distant guess at the meaning of all this, look’d sometimes on the one and sometimes on the other, with all the tokens of the utmost amazement, without being able to speak one syllable ; which gave Florimel the opportunity of unravelling the whole mystery of the affair, as she had

had before promised Melanthe to take upon herself to do.

In spite of the little resentment Murcio at first conceived for the trick had been put upon him, he could not forbear smiling within himself at the invention of the contriver; and the wit and spirit with which that young lady talk'd to him upon it, very much contributed to bring him into good humour; but that which entirely reconciled him to the wedded pair, was the consideration that Dorimon was wholly ignorant of the plot till after the marriage was concluded, and the assurance Melanthe gave him, that she was far from any intention to deceive him, but had flatter'd herself with the hope that Conrade would have broke the engagement, without mentioning to him the reasons he had for doing so.

Though to have married his daughter to Conrade would have saved him six thousand pounds, yet the many ill consequences which would probably, have attended so disproportionate a match now occurring to his mind, which before he had not thought upon, made him not only contented, but rejoiced that this change of hands had happen'd, and he could

could not forbear kissing and hugging Florimel for being the chief author of it.

Every one now endeavouring to outvie the other in giving testimonies of their good humour ; among the many gay and gallant things said by Dorimon on this occasion, he protested to keep his French cloaths as long as he lived, for a perpetual Memento of the good they had done for him, and never wear them but on the anniversary of that happy day which gave his dear Melanthe to his arms.

On falling afterwards into some discourse concerning the oddness of the accident which had brought about a marriage, so little thought of by either of the parties, yet so agreeable to both, as well as to their friends, Murcio express'd himself in this manner :

Murcio. ‘ I cannot help thinking that there is something peculiarly remarkable in this transaction, and looks as if the hand of Heaven had directed the accomplishment, which makes me hope the consequence will make good the old proverb, that

Blessed is the wooing
That's not long a doing.

Florimel. ‘ I dare almost engage my
‘ own life for the mutual happiness of
‘ theirs ; — their humours are so exactly
‘ suited to each other, that neither of
‘ them are fit for any body else ; and
‘ and now I consider on it, am amazed
‘ that in the long acquaintance they had
‘ together, this business never came into
‘ either of their heads till chance put it
‘ there.’

Dorimon. ‘ Nay, sister, I am now con-
‘ vinced, by the transport and the plea-
‘ sing flutter at my heart, on the offer
‘ Murcio made of his daughter, that I
‘ was then passionately in love with her,
‘ tho’ without knowing I was so.’

Melanthe, ‘ And if you had been as
‘ indifferent to me, as I then thought
‘ you were, I should not certainly have
‘ been so soon and so easily persuaded to
‘ be yours.’

Murcio. ‘ Well, — all things have
‘ happen’d for the best, and there is no-
‘ thing now wanting to complete my
‘ satisfaction, but the clearing up Melan-
‘ the’s

' he's innocence to Conrade. — I should
be glad he were here.'

The word was scarce out of his mouth, when a servant came into the room and informed him, that the person he had mention'd was below, on which he order'd he should be immediately introduced.

The old gentleman, who had heard nothing of what had happen'd, nor seen Murcio since the conversation with him, repeated in a former chapter, had been impatient to know the success of his proposal to Dorimon, and finding he did not return to town as usual, made him this visit at *****, in order to gratify his curiosity.

He had not advanced above half way into the room, when Murcio presented the bride and bridegroom to him ; and told him he had been just wishing for him to congratulate the nuptials.

Conrade endeavour'd to compose himself enough to salute them with the accustom'd forms ; but as he had not in his heart believed that Dorimon would be preval'd upon to marry Melanthe, tho' he had advised her father to make the experiment, was so much surprised on finding the

the affair concluded, that he could not forbear testifying it in his looks, as well as by crying out,

Conrade. ‘ What married ! ’

Florimel. ‘ Yes, sir, — they are married,—the indissoluble knot is tied ; — for which all due thanks be given to your fortunate mistake.’

Conrade. ‘ My mistake, madam ; — pardon me if I do not comprehend your meaning.’

Dorimon. ‘ I believe you do not, sir ; — yet it is to your mistaking another for me, that I am indebted for being put in possession of a happiness which otherwise I must have solicited for a long series of time, and perhaps at last never have obtain’d :—I do assure you, sir, I never presumed to entertain one wish to the dishonour of Melanthe, and was sleeping in my own bed when you imagined me just risen from her arms.’

Murcio. ‘ He tells you nothing but the truth ; — he is innocent,—so is Melanthe ; — but here stands her gallant ; — here is the author of this enguna.’

In concluding these words, which he had utter'd, with the most chearful air he patted Florimel upon her cheek and gently push'd her towards Conrade ; but that gentleman was now in such a consternation, that he scarce knew where he was, much less had the power of distinguishing the sense of any thing he either saw or heard, till Florimel related to him, in her sprightly fashion, every particular of that stratagem which had occasion'd the breaking off the intended match between him and Melanthe ; — Murcio also, and Dorimon, averring the truth of what she said, he began, at last, to see clearly into the whole affair ; — after which Melanthe, with a great deal of modesty and sweetnes, address'd herself to him in these terms :

Melanthe. ‘ I hope, sir, you will pardon the deception put upon you, as I was constrain'd to pursue so extraordinary a method, to avoid a thing which, in the end, must have been no less disagreeable to you than to myself : — I shall always acknowledge my obligation to the generous offer your affection made ; but love, sir, is not in our power, — if it were, my gratitude to you, the consideration of my own interest, and the duty

‘ duty owing to my father, would certainly have inspired me with it.’

Conrade. ‘ Say no more, sweet lady, I am ashamed of my past folly, and only wish you would exert all the influence you have over your witty she-gallant, not to expose this story in print; — I should be sorry, methinks, to see myself in a novel or play.’

Florimel, ‘ No, no, sir, you need be under no apprehensions on that score,— I would not, for my own sake, have the world know I put on breeches, lest my husband, when I get one, should be afraid I would attempt to wear them afterwards.’

This reply of Florimel’s set the whole company into a fit of laughter, and would doubtless have been the occasion of many pleasant repartees, if the butler had not that instant given them a summons to the next room, where was a table elegantly spread with every thing suitable to the season;—but as I could not partake with them of any of the delicacies I saw before me, I thought it best to leave the house, so accordingly I slipt out, pluck’d off my Belt, went into a boat, and order’d the waterman to row as fast as possible to London;

don ; where being arrived, I contented myself with such fare as my own homely board afforded.

Not many weeks from this adventure had elapsed, before I heard that Florimel was married to a young gentleman who for several years she had loved, and by whom she was equally beloved ;— my infatiate curiosity, on this information, led me to enquire into the hidden cause which had so long delay'd the completion of their mutual wishes ; and by ways and means too tedious to be here inserted, I at last discover'd it to be such as attracted my highest esteem and admiration.

Dorimon had been a little extravagant in his equipage and way of living while on his travels ;— her whole fortune lay in his hands, and if call'd out, which in all probability would have been the case if she had married, he must have been obliged to mortgage some part of his estate for the payment ; — it was therefore to save her brother from so great an inconvenience, that this generous young lady had been deaf to all the sollicitations of a beloved lover, and the soft pleadings of her own heart, till Melanthe's fortune coming into the family removed the only impediment to her wishes.

Thus,

Thus, by the most unseen, undreamt of means, does Providence dispose every thing for the advantage of its favourites : — Florimel, by her wit and contrivance to serve her fair friend, without proposing the least interest to herself, or even imagining she could have any, not only brought about her brother's happiness, but met her own reward in the accomplishment of her felicity.

These two families lived together in the most perfect harmony, and Murcio, who is little less fond of Florimel than of his own daughter, passes most of his time among them ; Conrade also is extremely intimate with both, insomuch that it is thought he will, at his decease, divide a good part of his large fortune between them.

End of the First VOLUME.



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